

VALIANT

SPACE

SPECIAL

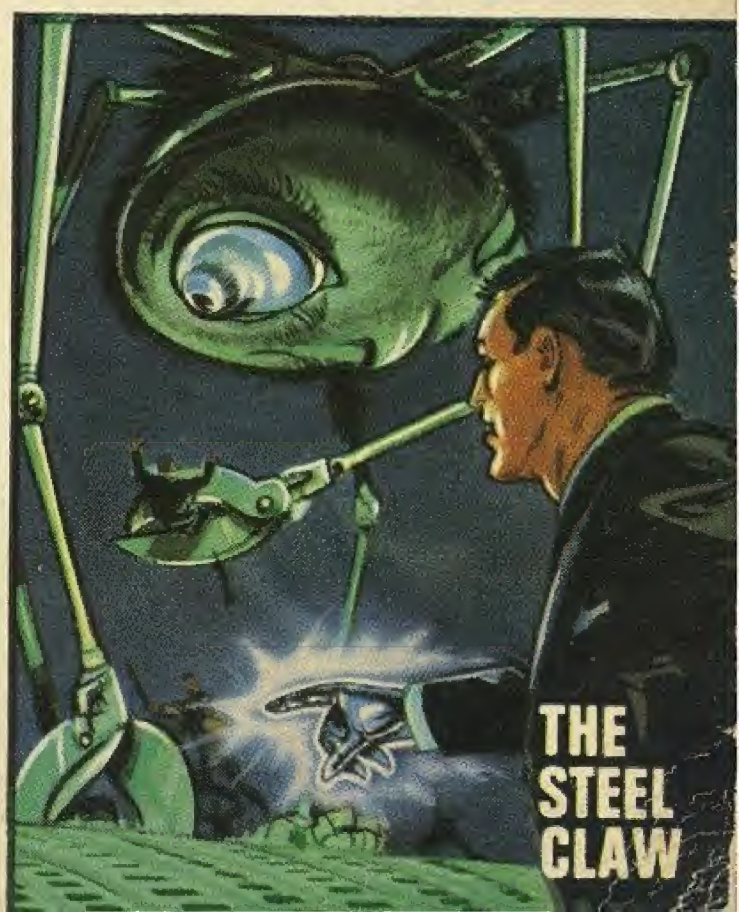
1967



CAPTAIN HURRICANE



**KELLY'S
EYE**



**THE
STEEL
CLAW**

STARS ON VIEW IN VALIANT SPACE SPECIAL



KELLY'S EYE

TIM KELLY, OWNER OF THE LIFE-PRESERVING EYE OF ZOLTEC, WAS MAKING HIS WAY HOME IN THE THICK OF AN EXCITED CROWD OF FOOTBALL FANS. HE HAD ENJOYED A RARE AFTERNOON OF RELAXATION, LITTLE KNOWING THAT HE WAS ON THE VERGE OF ONE OF THE MOST DANGEROUS ADVENTURES OF HIS LIFE...

NTWOOD
TBALL CLUB

CAR
ARK



SUDDENLY, A LITTLE MAN KNOWN TO THE UNDERWORLD OF CRIME AS "NIPPER THE DIP," JOSTLED HIM...

SORRY, MATE...
I MUST HAVE
TRIPPED!

THAT'S
ALL RIGHT!



BUT IT WAS FAR FROM ALL RIGHT — AS TIM DISCOVERED A MOMENT LATER WHEN HE FELT THE EMPTINESS OF HIS INSIDE POCKET!

THE EYE OF ZOLTEC...
IT'S GONE! THAT LITTLE
MAN MUST HAVE PICKED
MY POCKET!



THE EYE OF ZOLTEC MADE ANY
PERSON WHO HELD OR WORE
IT... INDESTRUCTIBLE!

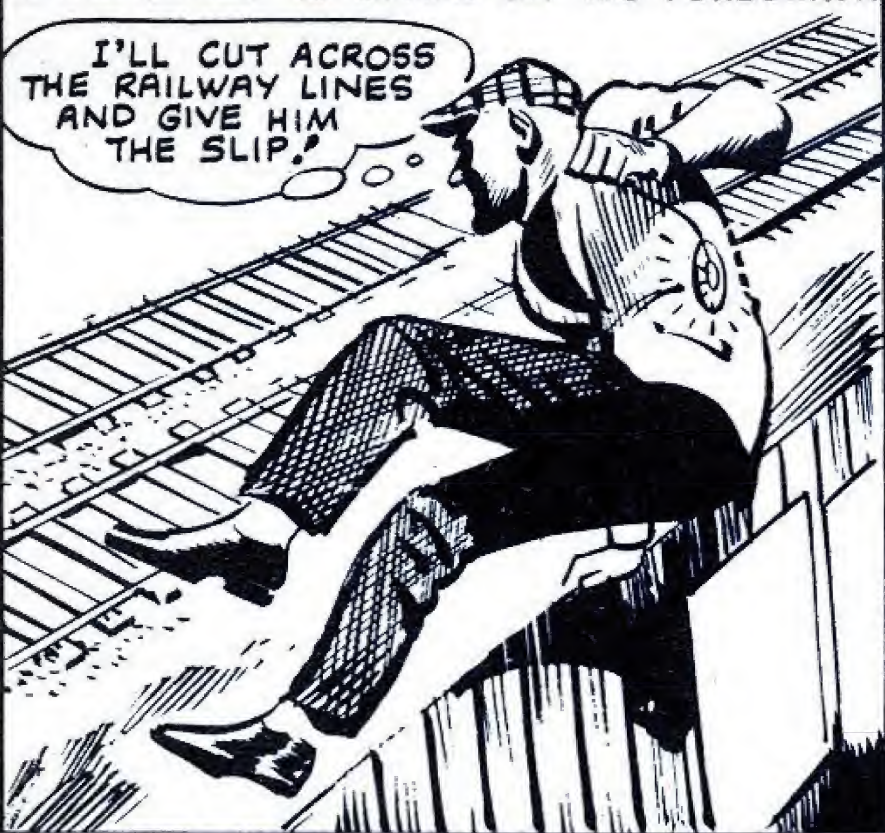
BY THIS TIME, THE THIEF WAS
A DISTANT FIGURE, DODGING
IN AND OUT AMONG THE
CROWD!

STOP THIEF!
STOP!

LUMME! HE'S
SOON TWIGGED!



THE LITTLE CROOK VAULTED OVER A FENCE, DETERMINED TO SHAKE OFF HIS PURSUER...



I'LL CUT ACROSS THE RAILWAY LINES AND GIVE HIM THE SLIP!

A SLOW GOODS TRAIN WAS RUMBLING ALONG THE "DOWN" LINE, AND THE THIEF DASHED IN FRONT OF IT...



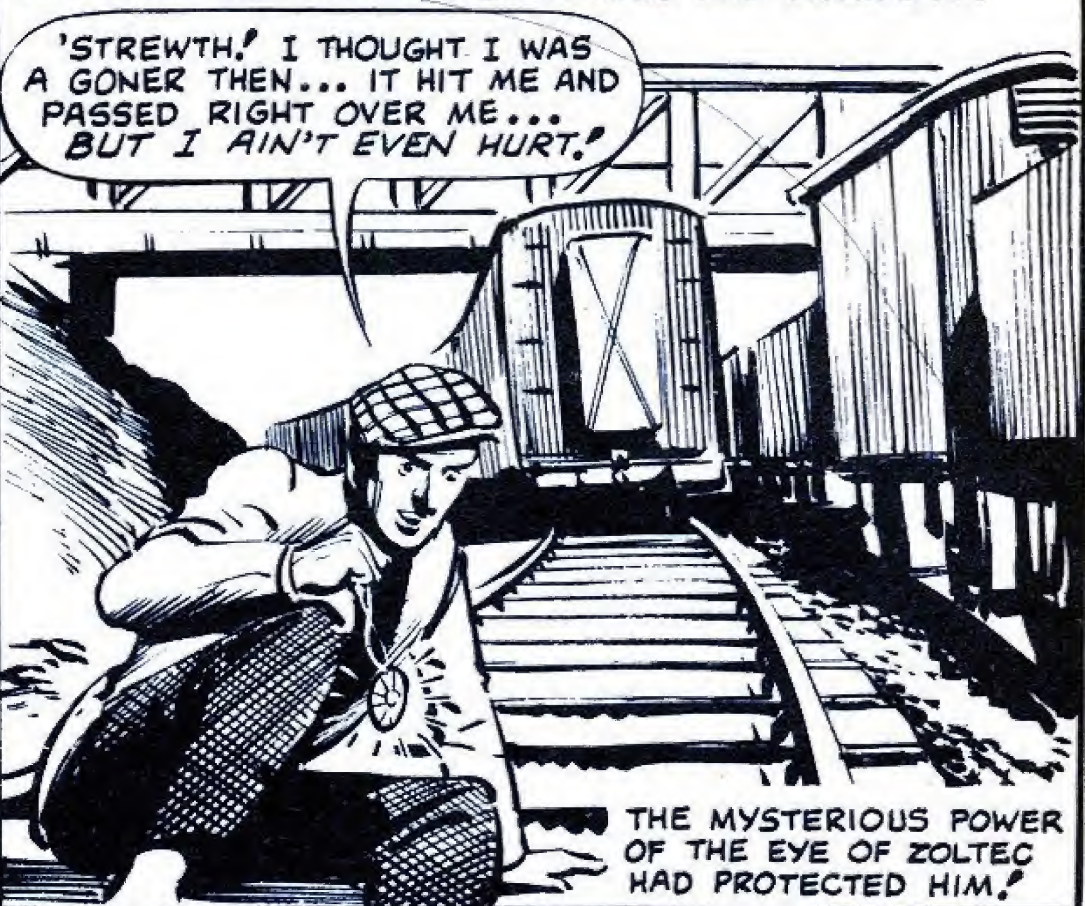
THIS TRAIN WILL HOLD HIM UP FOR A BIT!

BUT THE PICKPOCKET HAD NOT NOTICED THE FAST EXPRESS HURTLING ALONG THE MAIN LINE!



AAAAAGH!

BUT AFTER THE THUNDERING EXPRESS HAD PASSED...



'STREWTH! I THOUGHT I WAS A GONER THEN... IT HIT ME AND PASSED RIGHT OVER ME... BUT I AIN'T EVEN HURT!

THE MYSTERIOUS POWER OF THE EYE OF ZOLTEC HAD PROTECTED HIM!

NIPPER THE DIP LOST NO TIME IN ESCAPING FROM TIM KELLY!



HE'S GONE! I'LL JUST HAVE TO KEEP SEARCHING THE STREETS FOR HIM ON THE CHANCE THAT I'LL CATCH UP WITH HIM AGAIN!

ABOUT HALF AN HOUR LATER, THE LITTLE THIEF WAS IN A TELEPHONE BOX...



I'VE GOT IT, GUV'NOR, JUST LIKE YOU SAID — AND I HAD A BIT O' LUCK WHEN KELLY CHASED ME!

NEVER MIND THAT! LEAVE THE EYE OF ZOLTEC ON THE SHELF BEHIND THE DIRECTORIES, THEN GO TO THE 'PHONE BOOTH ON THE CORNER OF PARADISE STREET! YOU'LL COLLECT YOUR PAYMENT THERE!

BY A FREAK OF CHANCE, TIM KELLY SAW NIPPER ENTERING THE PARADISE STREET TELEPHONE BOX...

BY THUNDER! THAT'S THE PICKPOCKET WHO TOOK THE EYE OF ZOLTEC!



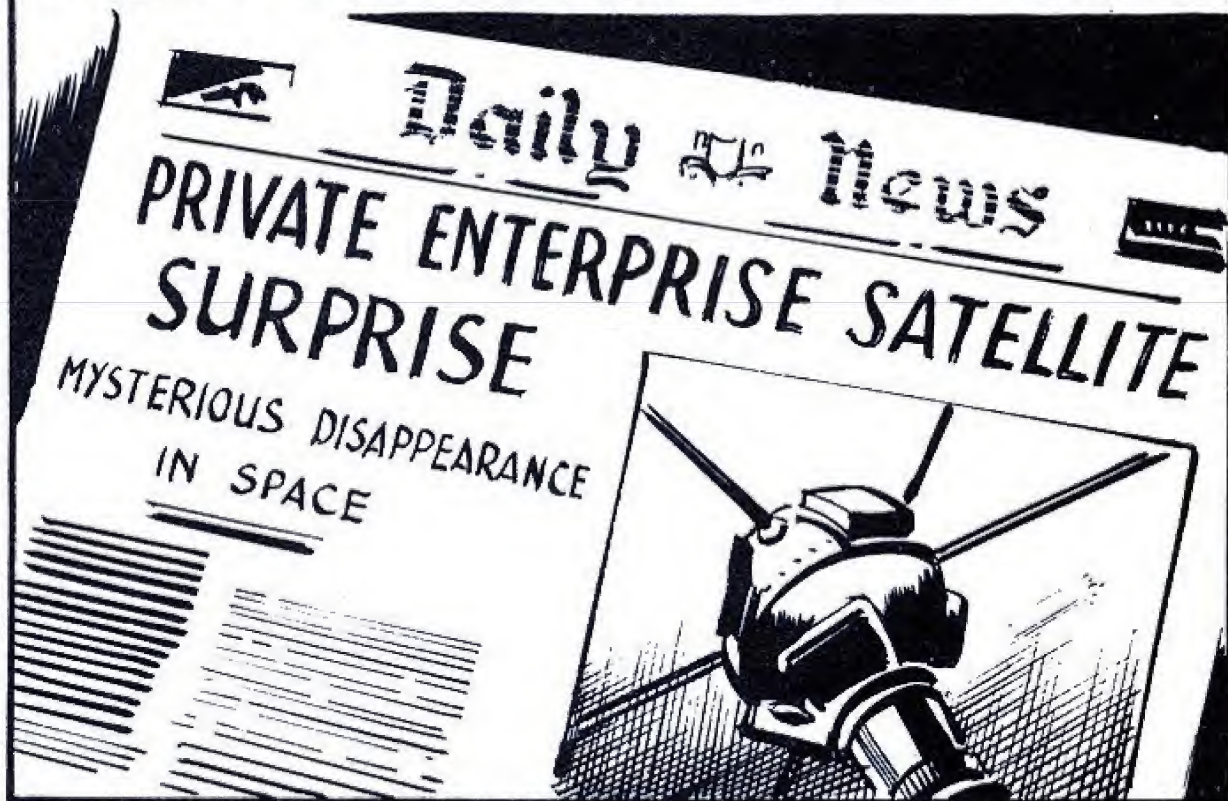
BUT NO SOONER HAD THE DOOR CLOSED UPON THE LITTLE VILLAIN, THAN....



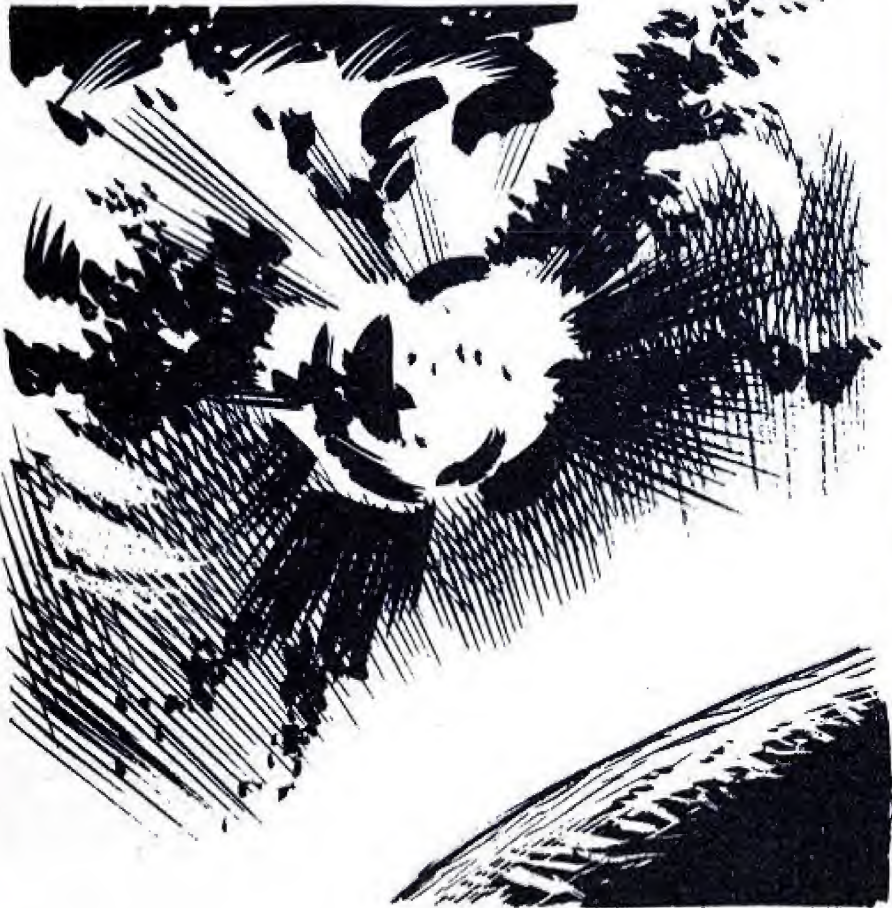
HE'S BEEN SILENCED... SO HE MUST HAVE ALREADY PASSED THE EYE OF ZOLTEC ON TO SOMEONE ELSE — BUT WHO?



THERE WAS NO CLUE AS TO WHERE TIM'S PRECIOUS EYE OF ZOLTEC HAD GONE, OR FOR WHAT PURPOSE IT HAD BEEN STOLEN. THE FOLLOWING DAY NEWS WAS RELEASED THAT THE FIRST INTEL CORP SATELLITE HAD BEEN MYSTERIOUSLY DESTROYED...



ONE WEEK LATER, A SECOND SATELLITE SUFFERED A SIMILAR FATE...



...AND TIM KELLY WAS URGENTLY SUMMONED TO THE CITY OFFICES OF "INTELCORP", A GROUP OF FINANCIERS WHO HAD RECEIVED GOVERNMENT SANCTION TO PUT THEIR OWN COMMUNICATIONS SATELLITES INTO ORBIT.

COME IN, MR. KELLY, AND SIT DOWN.

AYE, YOU'LL NEED TO BE SITTING DOWN... BECAUSE WE'RE ABOUT TO OFFER YOU THE TRICKIEST JOB YOU'VE EVER UNDERTAKEN.



SORRY, GENTLEMEN! I'M NO LONGER IN THE MARKET FOR DANGER... AT LEAST, NOT UNTIL I'VE GOT BACK THE EYE OF ZOLTEC WHICH WAS STOLEN FROM ME SOME DAYS AGO!



A MURMUR PASSED AROUND THE TABLE AS THE MEMBERS OF INTEL CORP EXPLAINED TO EACH OTHER ABOUT THE FANTASTIC STONE FROM AN INCA IDOL...

AH! THEN THAT AT LEAST SOLVES PART OF OUR PROBLEM... HOW ANYONE WAS ABLE TO DESTROY OUR SATELLITES!



YOU SEE, THE SATELLITES CONTAINED THEIR OWN DEFENCE SYSTEM... FOR USE AGAINST METEORITES REALLY. IT CONSISTED OF A DEVICE WHICH COULD DETECT ANY OBJECT THAT APPROACHED WITHIN A QUARTER OF A MILE, AND DESTROY IT BY A LASER BEAM WITHIN ONE HUNDREDTH PART OF A SECOND!



AYE! SO WHOEVER HAS THE EYE OF ZOLTEC COULD APPROACH OUR SATELLITES AND DESTROY THEM... UNHINDERED BY THE LASER BEAM!

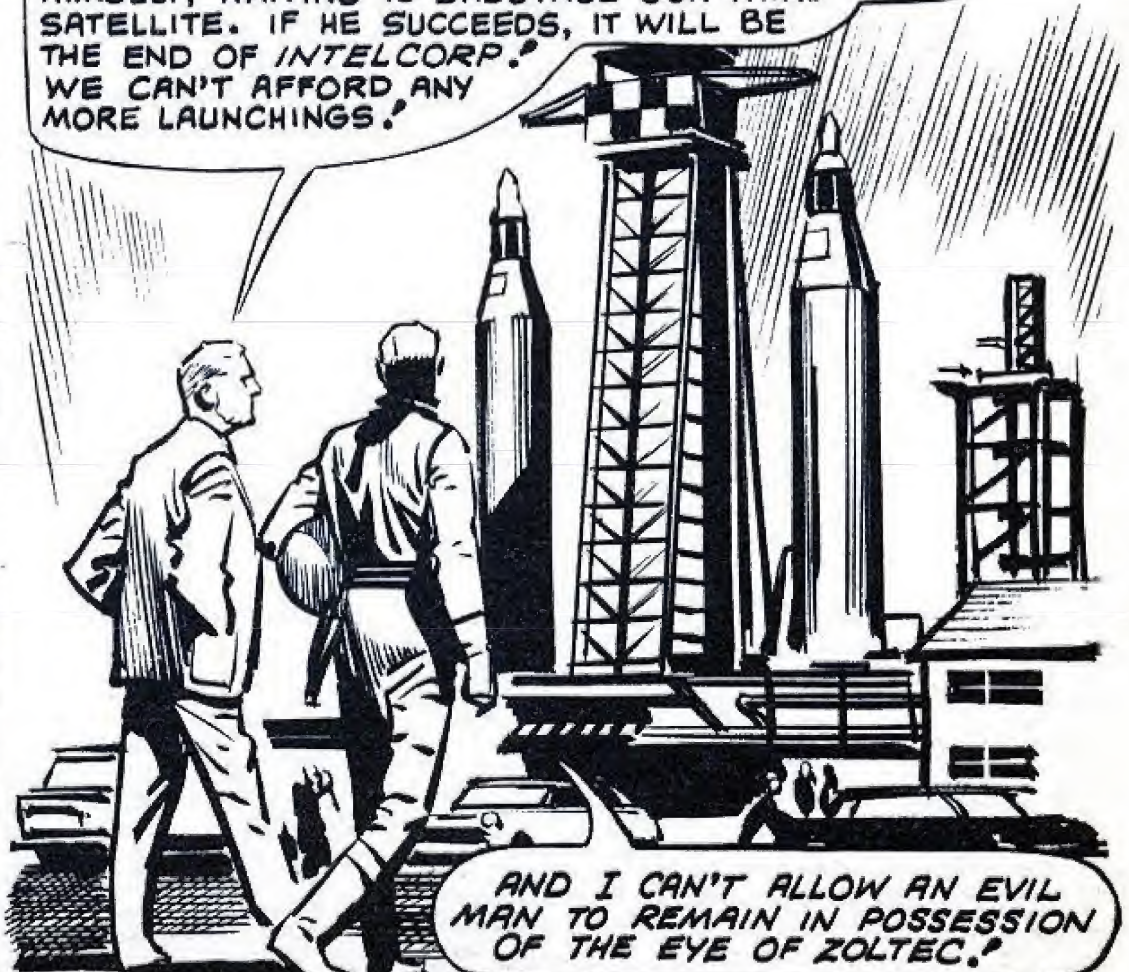
BUT WHO HAS THE EYE OF ZOLTEC?



THE CHAIRMAN OF INTEL CORP PUT FORWARD A PLAN TO WHICH TIM KELLY AGREED. IT CONSISTED OF LAUNCHING TIM INTO SPACE AT THE SAME TIME AS THEY PUT THEIR THIRD SATELLITE INTO ORBIT!

IT'S OUR BELIEF THAT VINER IS STILL UP THERE, LIVING IN A SPACE CAPSULE HE LAUNCHED HIMSELF, WAITING TO SABOTAGE OUR THIRD SATELLITE. IF HE SUCCEEDS, IT WILL BE THE END OF INTEL CORP! WE CAN'T AFFORD ANY MORE LAUNCHINGS!

I THINK IT'S KARL VINER! HE'S WEALTHIER THAN ALL OF US PUT TOGETHER... HE'S BEEN VENGEFUL AND BITTER EVER SINCE THE GOVERNMENT REFUSED HIM PERMISSION TO PUT UP A SATELLITE AND GRANTED IT TO US INSTEAD!



AND I CAN'T ALLOW AN EVIL MAN TO REMAIN IN POSSESSION OF THE EYE OF ZOLTEC!

THE DOUBLE LAUNCHING OF MAN AND COMMUNICATIONS SATELLITE ACHIEVED SUCCESS!



TIM ARRIVED IN SPACE AND MANOEUVRED HIS SPACE CAPSULE IN A WATCHING ORBIT BEYOND THE RANGE OF THE COMMUNICATION SATELLITE'S PROTECTIVE LASER BEAM...



AFTER SEVERAL ORBITS...

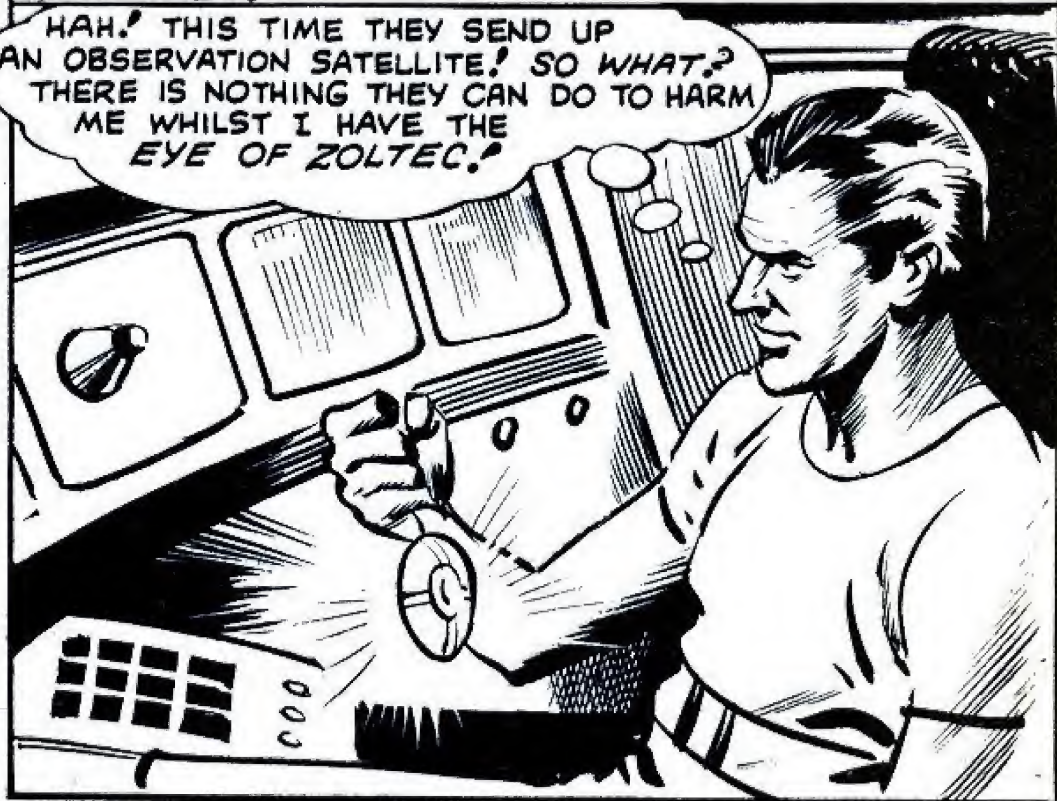
THERE'S SOMETHING MOVING THIS WAY... THIS COULD BE WHAT I'M LOOKING FOR!



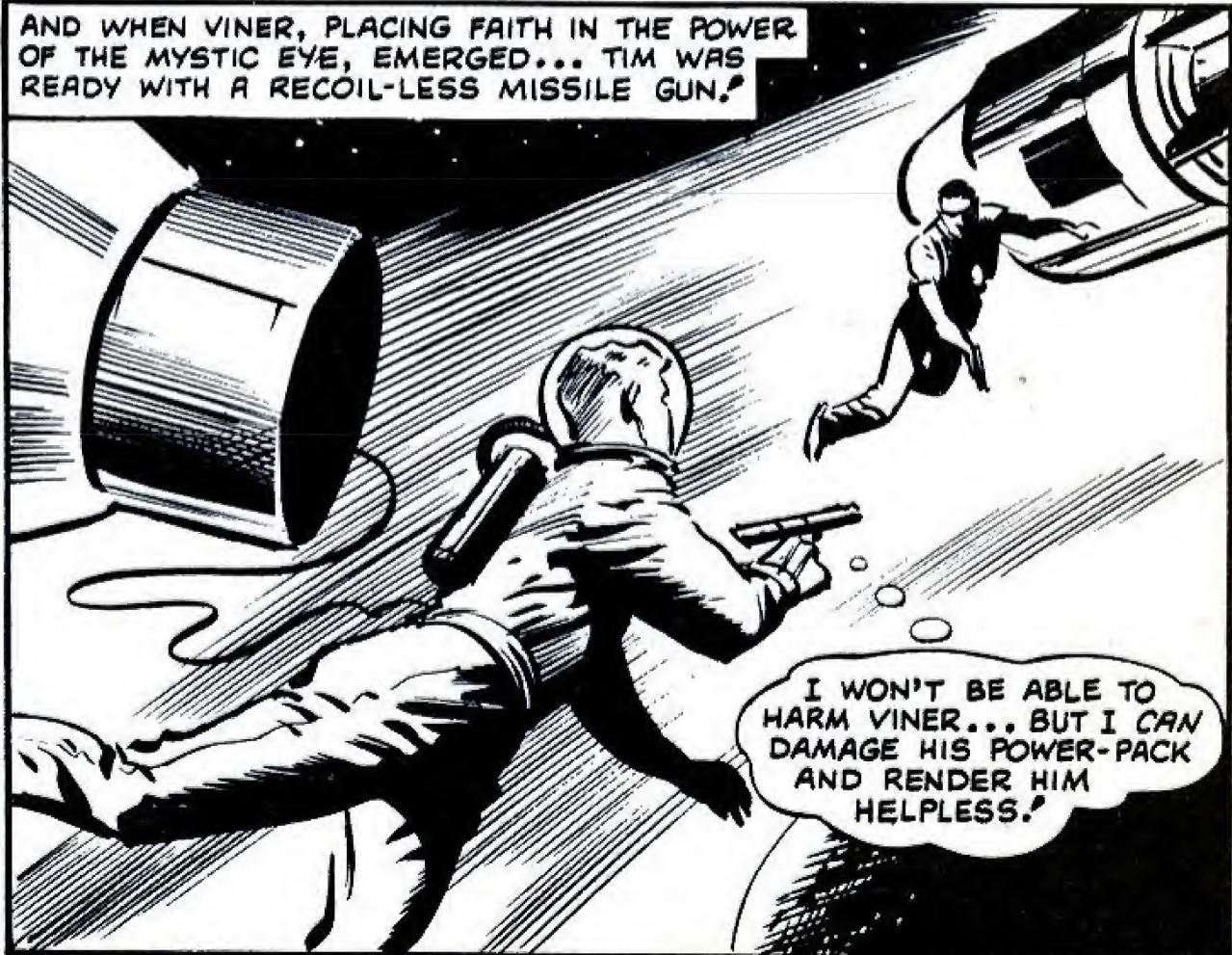
BY SKILFUL USE OF HIS VERNIER JETS, TIM KELLY EDGED HIS CAPSULE IN A POSITION TO INTERCEPT VINER...

BUT TIM'S VEHICLE HAD ALSO BEEN SPOTTED... BY THE OCCUPANT OF THE APPROACHING CAPSULE, THE VENGEFUL KARL VINER!

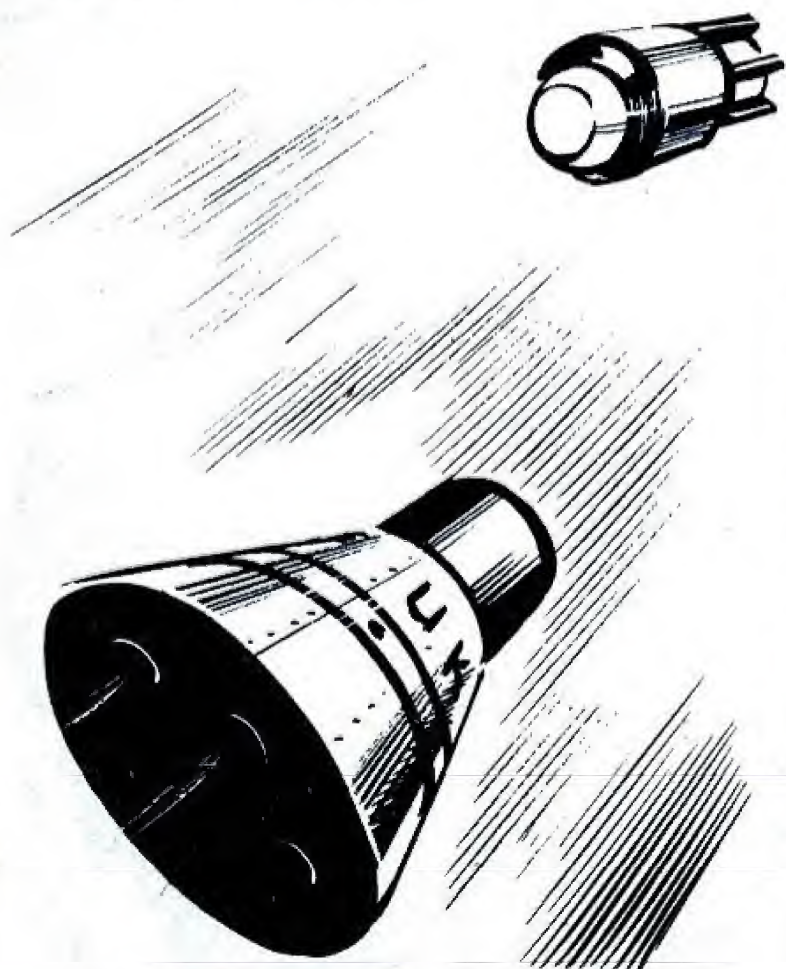
HAH! THIS TIME THEY SEND UP AN OBSERVATION SATELLITE! SO WHAT? THERE IS NOTHING THEY CAN DO TO HARM ME WHILST I HAVE THE EYE OF ZOLTEC!



AND WHEN VINER, PLACING FAITH IN THE POWER OF THE MYSTIC EYE, EMERGED... TIM WAS READY WITH A RECOIL-LESS MISSILE GUN!



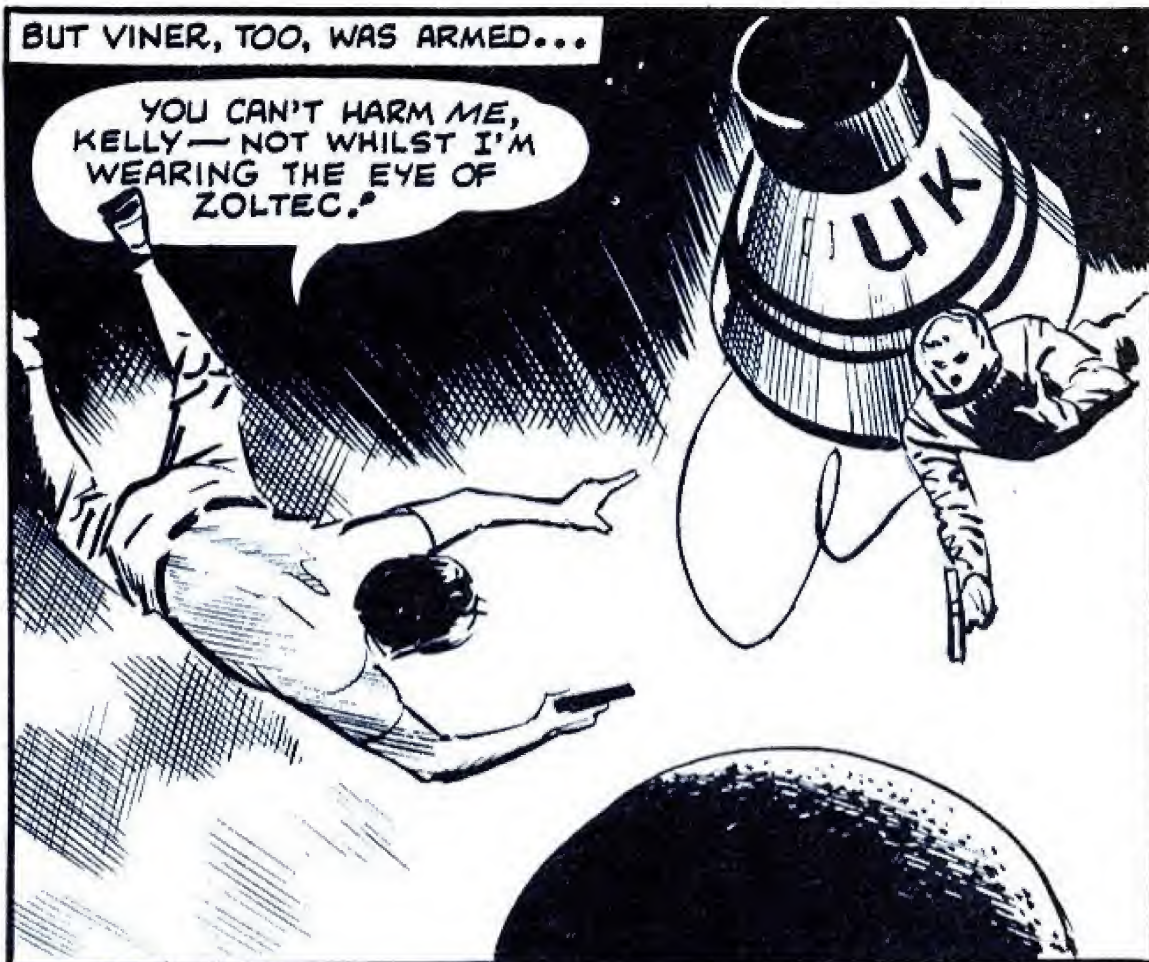
I WON'T BE ABLE TO HARM VINER... BUT I CAN DAMAGE HIS POWER-PACK AND RENDER HIM HELPLESS!



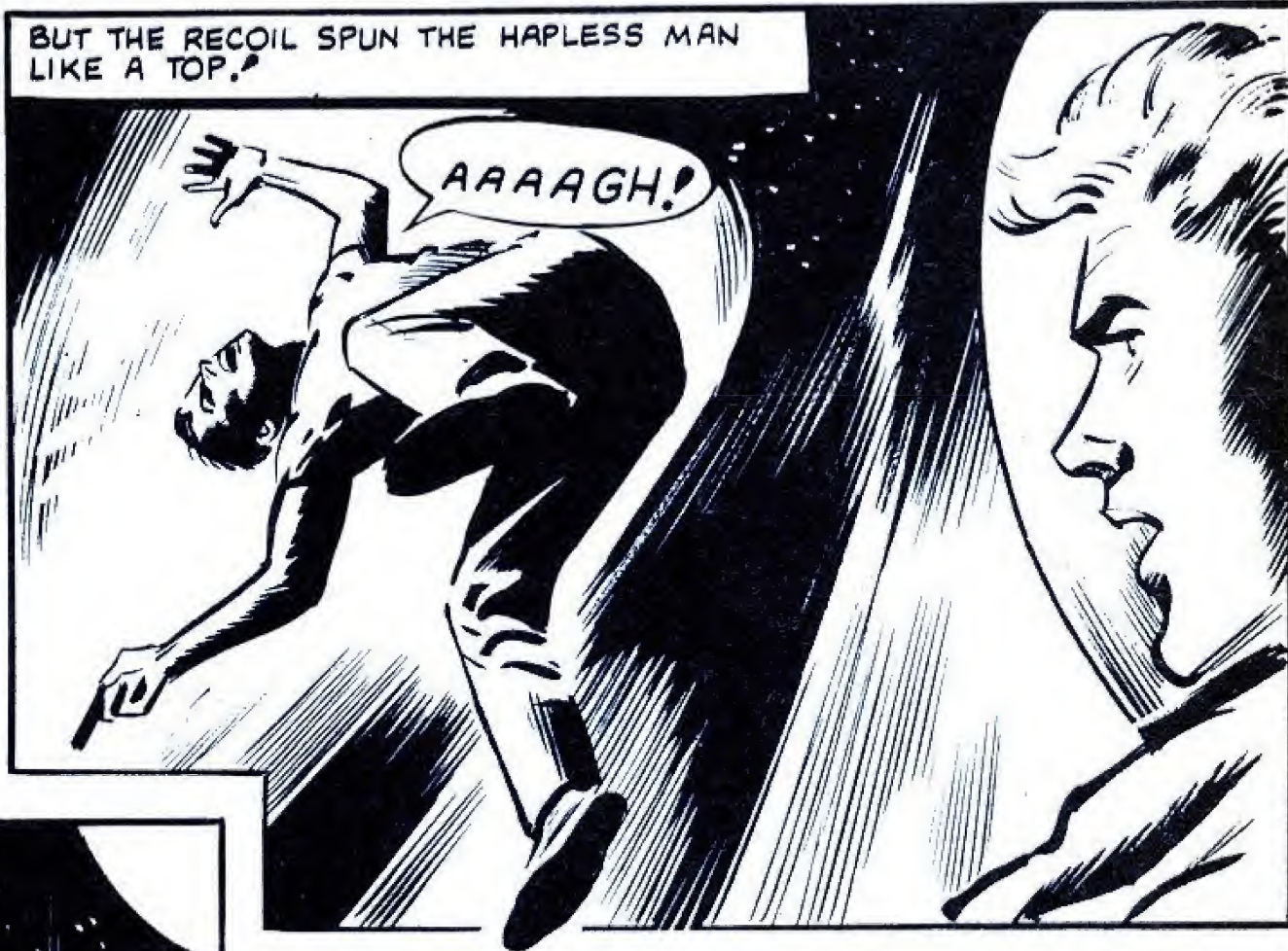


NEXT INSTANT, TIM KELLY JETTED FORWARDS — AND VINER FIRED....

BUT VINER, TOO, WAS ARMED...



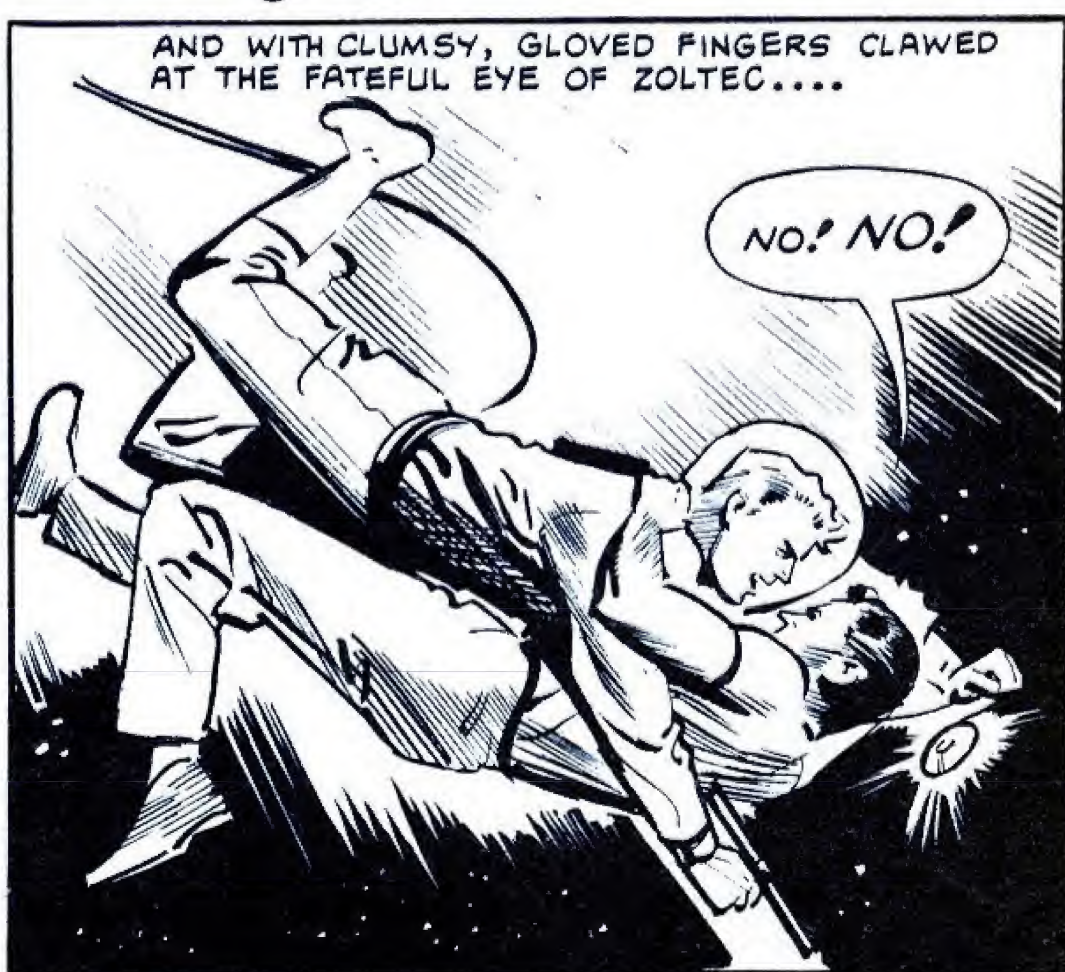
BUT THE RECOIL SPUN THE HAPLESS MAN LIKE A TOP.



TIM GRABBED DESPERATELY....



AND WITH CLUMSY, GLOVED FINGERS CLAWED AT THE FATEFUL EYE OF ZOLTEC....



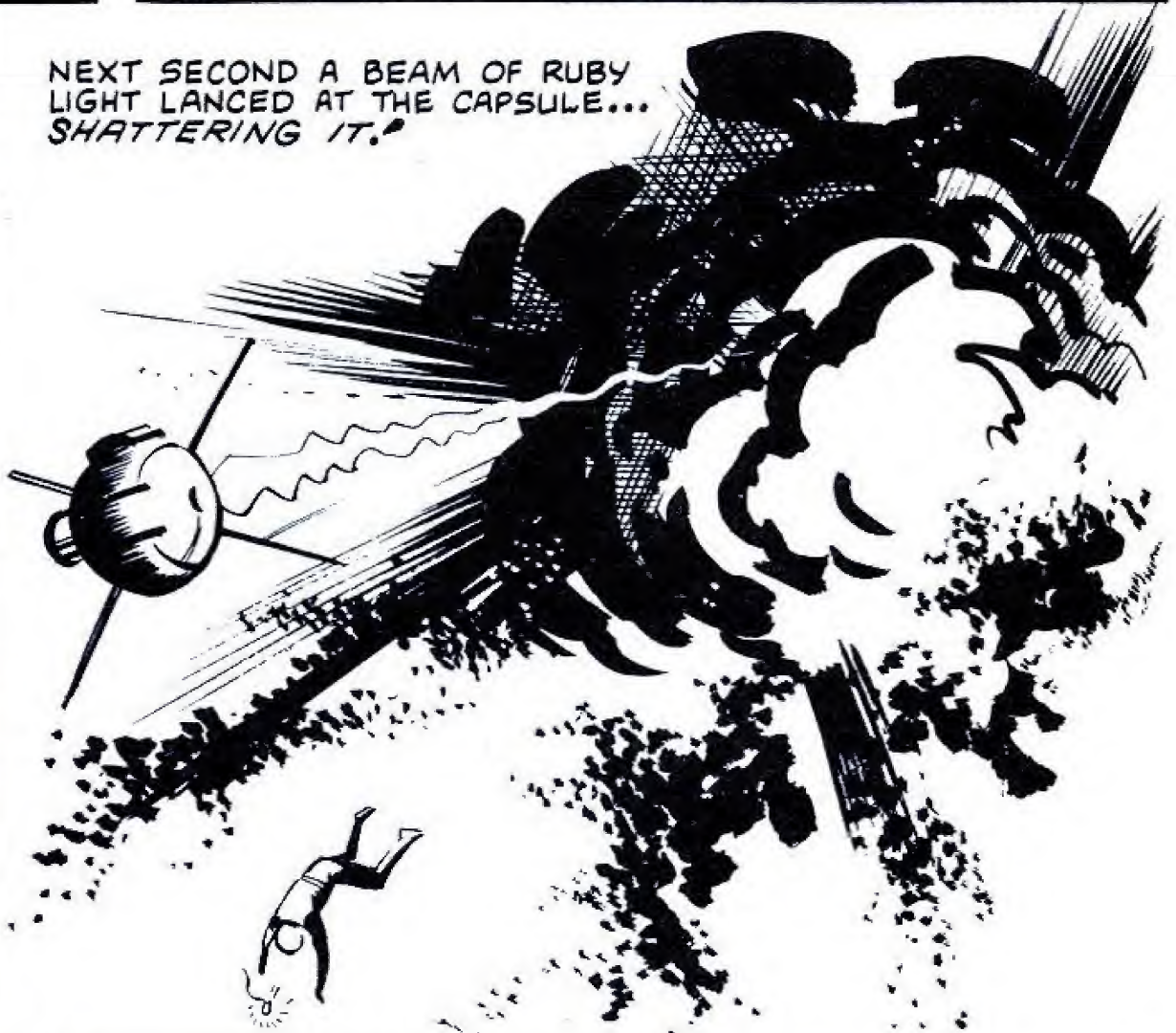
THE CORD SNAPPED. THE MYSTIC EYE
CAME AWAY IN TIM'S HANDS... AND IN THAT
INSTANT VINER DREW HIS LAST BREATH!



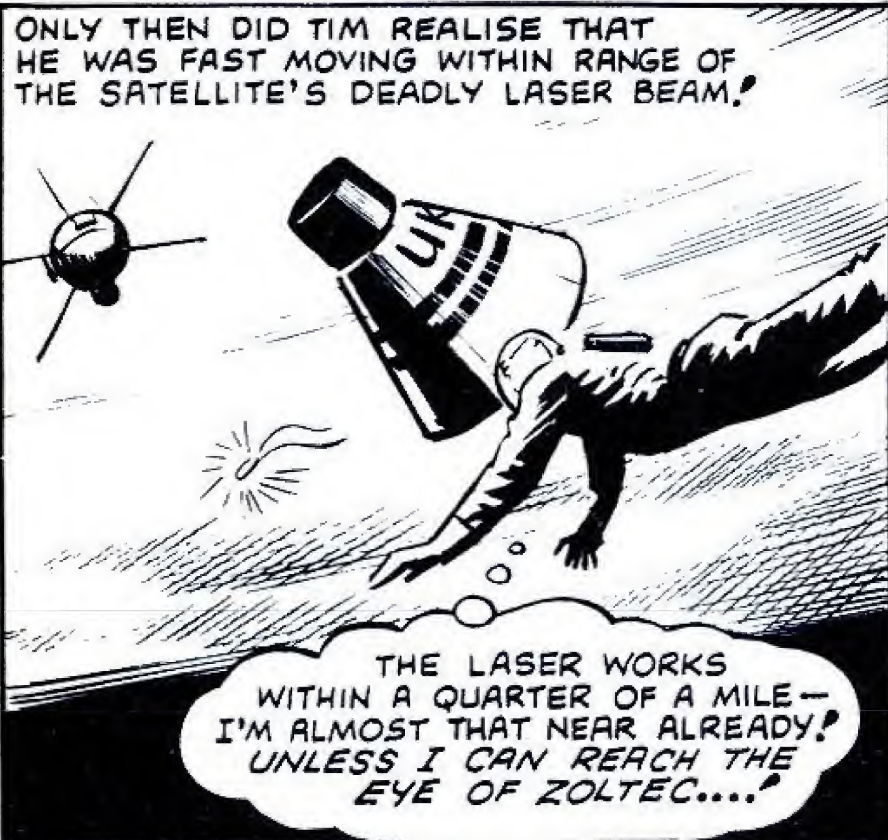
BUT THE THIN CORD TRAILED THROUGH TIM'S
THICK GLOVES....



NEXT SECOND A BEAM OF RUBY
LIGHT LANCED AT THE CAPSULE...
SHATTERING IT!



ONLY THEN DID TIM REALISE THAT
HE WAS FAST MOVING WITHIN RANGE OF
THE SATELLITE'S DEADLY LASER BEAM!



TIM CLAMPED HIS HANDS OVER THE EYE AS
HE MOVED INTO THE LASER-SWEPT DANGER
ZONE!



THE BEAM WAS RUTHLESS IN ITS DETERMINATION
TO DESTROY....



WITHOUT A CAPSULE, I'LL HAVE TO
FIND MY OWN WAY BACK TO EARTH!



AS HE PLUNGED OUT OF ORBIT INTO THE
UPPER FRINGES OF THE ATMOSPHERE
THE REMNANTS OF HIS SUIT HEATED UP
INTO A BRILLIANT FRICTION RED....



SPLASHDOWN WAS SOMEWHERE IN THE ENGLISH
CHANNEL...



THE LOWER STAGE OF HIS DESCENT WAS WITNESSED
BY A TRANSATLANTIC AIRLINE PILOT...



WHAT ON EARTH IS IT—
A METEORITE?

WHICH MEANT A LONG SWIM ASHORE, AND A CLIFF TO
CLIMB BEFORE TIM KELLY REACHED CIVILISATION...

IS THAT THE OFFICES
OF INTEL CORP? TIM KELLY
HERE, REPORTING
MISSION ACCOMPLISHED.
SORRY I HAD TO REVERSE
THE CHARGES FOR THIS
CALL...



... BUT I'M RIGHT OUT
OF SMALL CHANGE!



THE END

THE KIDS FROM KOSMA

FIVE MONTHS HAD PASSED SINCE THE GLEAMING SPACE-FREIGHTER HAD LEFT THE MIGHTY PLANET KOSMA... FIRST OF THE GALACTIC WORLDS TO BE COLONISED BY IMMIGRANTS FROM EARTH. NOW, THE FIERCE ROAR OF ROCKET-MOTORS SEEMED TO ECHO THE THANKFUL SIGHS OF THE FREIGHTER'S CREW...

CAPSULE LAUNCHED! ON COURSE FOR DISTAFF 7!

THANK THE STARS! WE'VE GOT RID OF THEM AT LAST!

GUIDED BY COMPUTER SIGNALS FROM EARTH, THE CAPSULE FELL TOWARDS ITS DESTINATION—SOMEWHERE IN SOUTH AMERICA...

TRAGGMAN WILL HAVE HIS HANDS FULL WITH THOSE TWO! SEEMS A BIT HARSH, THOUGH—!

SAVE YOUR PITY! THEIR PREOCCUPATION WITH SPORT WAS UNHEALTHY! WE HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO EXPEL THEM FROM KOSMA!

FAR BELOW, INSIDE THE GREAT CORRECTIVE CENTRE OF DISTAFF 7, SOME OF THE INSTRUCTORS WERE WATCHING A TELECAST OF AN INTER-CONTINENTAL ATHLETICS MATCH...

THEY'RE OFF—THE FINAL OF THE 100 METRES!

BARRETT OF AMERICA IS IN THE LEAD!

GO ON, JACKSON... GO ON!

BARRETT HAS WON—IN 9.4 SECONDS!

IT'S A NEW WORLD RECORD!

HAH! THE BRITISH RUNNER WAS LAST AGAIN!



BOB CANNON TURNED AWAY FROM HIS GRINNING COLLEAGUES...

BUT OUR TURN WILL COME! WE'LL FIND A WORLD-BEATER, ONE DAY! JUST YOU WAIT AND SEE!



STILL SMARTING WITH RAGE, BOB WENT OUT TO THE RECEPTION AREA, WHERE THE CAPSULE FROM THE KOSMANIAN FREIGHTER WAS JUST LANDING...

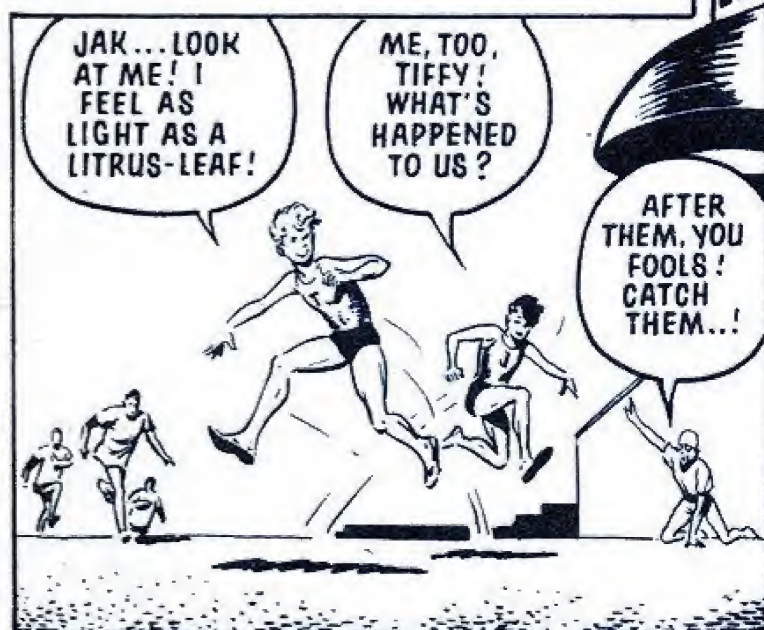


THE FRICTION-HEATED CAPSULE WAS SPRAYED WITH A COOLANT. THEN THE DIRECTOR OF DISTAFF 7 STEPPED FORWARD...

STAND BACK! THE OCCUPANTS OF THIS CAPSULE HAVE BEEN SENT TO US FOR SEVERE CORRECTIVE TRAINING! THEY COULD BE DANGEROUS!



CAUTIOUSLY, THE HATCH OF THE CAPSULE SWUNG OPEN. THEN...



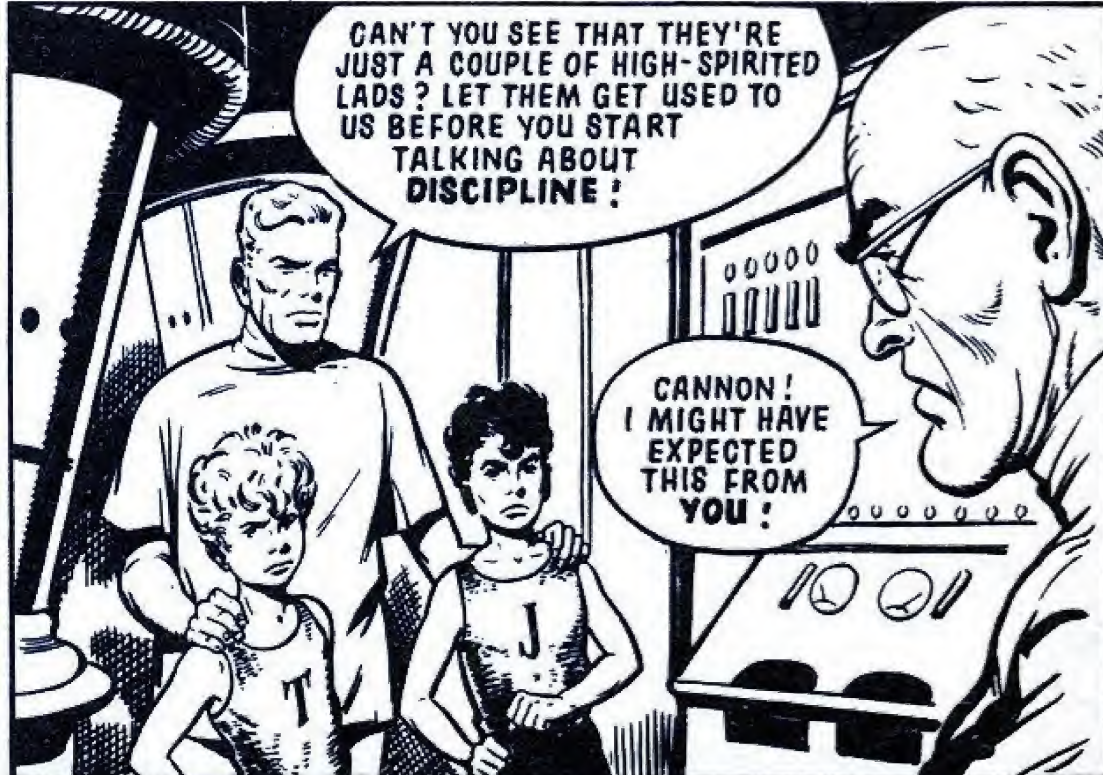
WITH FANTASTIC EASE, THE POWERFULLY-BUILT YOUNGSTERS LEAPT AND SOARED THROUGH THE MIDST OF THEIR PURSUERS...

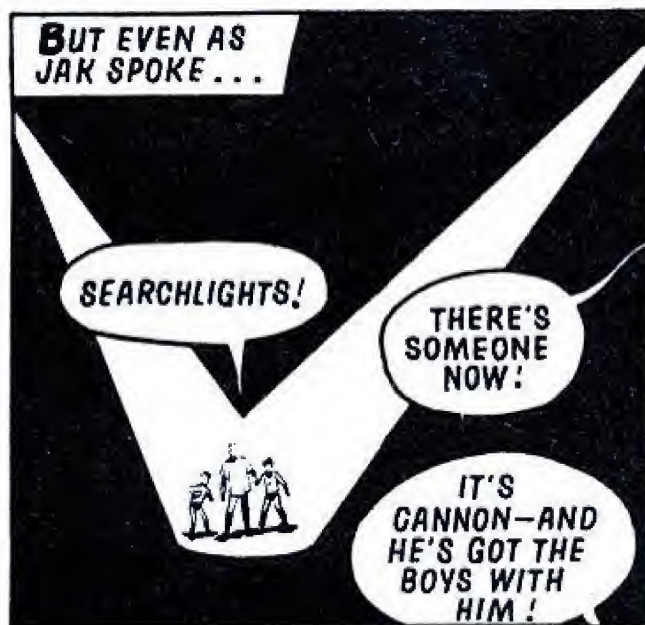
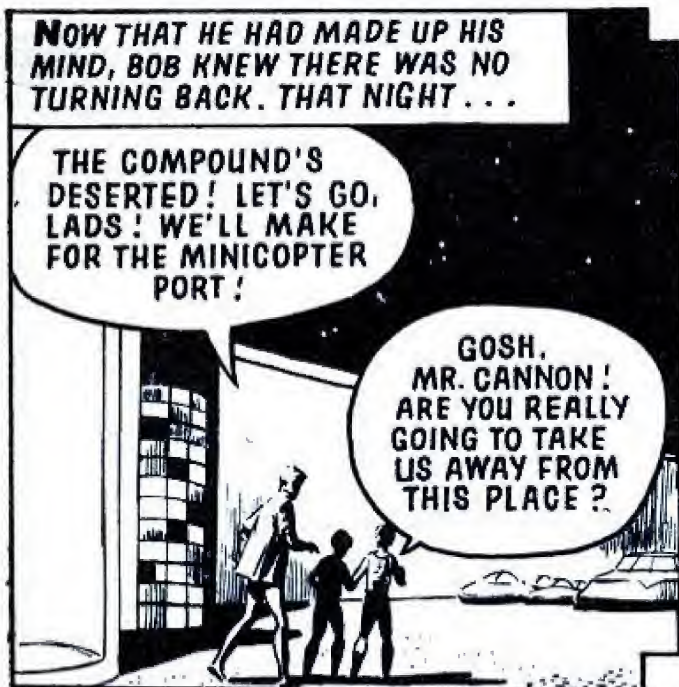
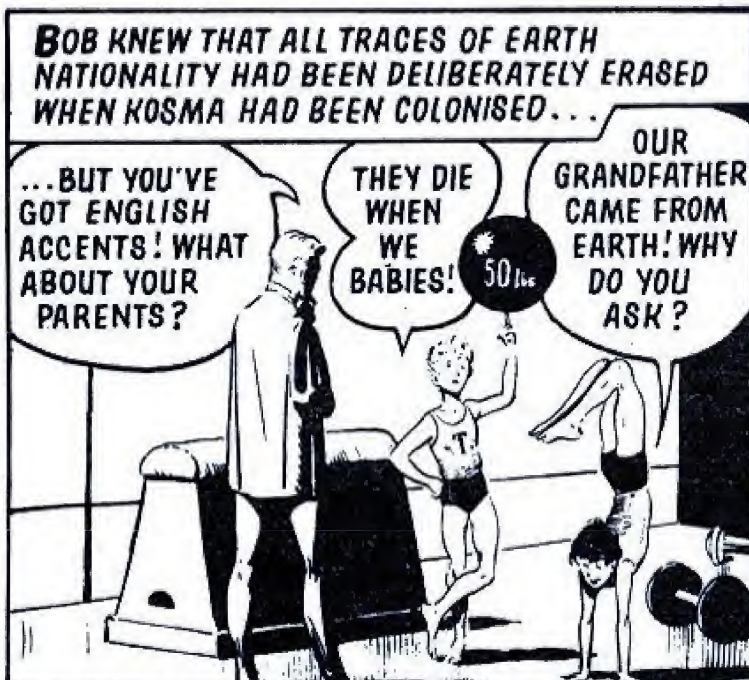
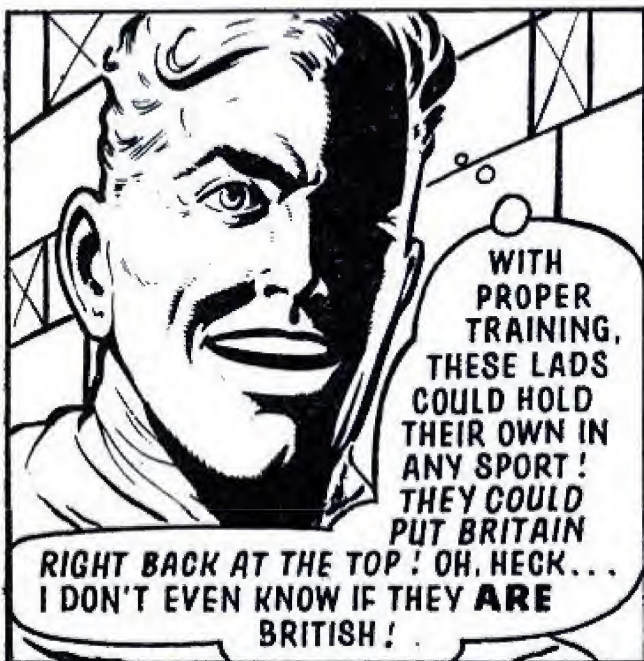
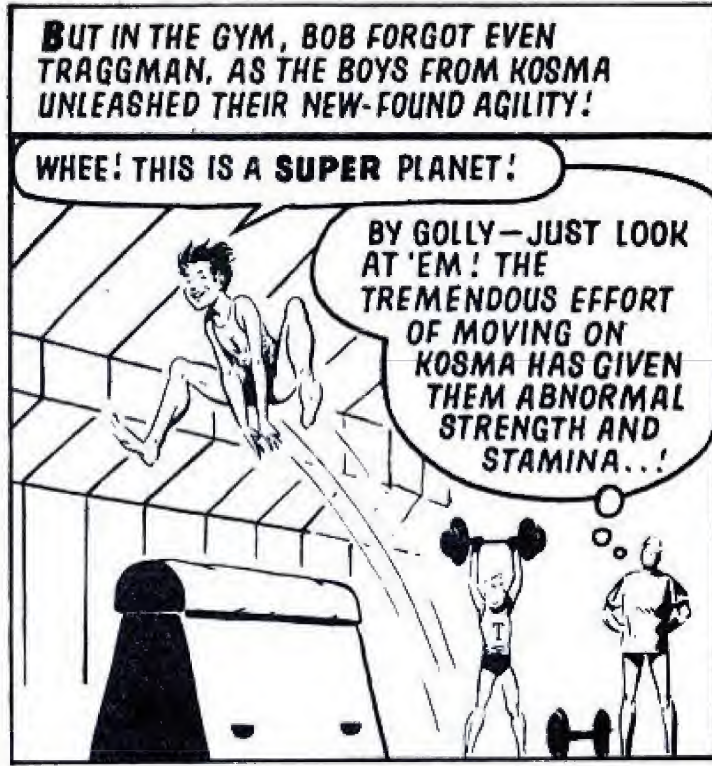


THEY'VE COME FROM KOSMA, REMEMBER? THE SURFACE GRAVITY OF KOSMA IS SIX TIMES GREATER THAN EARTH!



AT LAST, THE AMAZING NEW ARRIVALS WERE ROUNDED UP, AND BROUGHT BEFORE THE INFURIATED TRAGGMAN...





TO THE AMAZING KIDS FROM KOSMA
IT WAS AN EFFORTLESS LEAP...

UHH!



SEE,
MR. CANNON?

IT'S EASY!

STILL HOLDING CANNON
BETWEEN THEM, THEY LANDED
AS LIGHTLY AS FEATHERS—AND
KEPT ON RUNNING...

SORRY, LADS, BUT
WE'LL NEVER MAKE IT
ON FOOT TO THE 'COPTER
PORT. IT'S FIVE MILES
AWAY!



DON'T WORRY—
LEAVE IT TO US,
SIR!

FIFTEEN MINUTES LATER...

LOOKS LIKE WE'RE
HERE ALREADY, MR.
CANNON!

TRAGGMAN
WON'T THINK
WE'VE GOT THIS FAR!
IF HE HASN'T
RADIOED THE
'COPTER PORT, WE'VE
STILL GOT A
CHANCE!



AS THEY WALKED THROUGH THE GATEWAY,
BOB WAS STILL TRYING TO RECOVER HIS BREATH...



EVENING,
MR. CANNON!
THESE THE TWO
NEW KIDS AT
THE DISTAFF
CORRECTIVE
CENTRE?

THAT'S
RIGHT. I
THOUGHT
I'D SHOW
THEM AN
EARTH
'COPTER
PORT!



NEXT INSTANT...

WHERE NOW,
MR. CANNON?

IT LOOKS
LIKE TRAGGMAN
HASN'T
RADIOED THE
PORT
CONTROLLERS
YET!

THERE'S NO POINT IN US USING
A LOCAL 'COPTER FOR A SHORT HOP.
BOYS! AS SOON AS THE ALARM GOES
OUT A WIDE-SPREAD SEARCH WILL
BE MADE!



HEY, CANNON!
I'VE GOT DISTAFF
7 ON THE PHONE!
THOSE KIDS—!

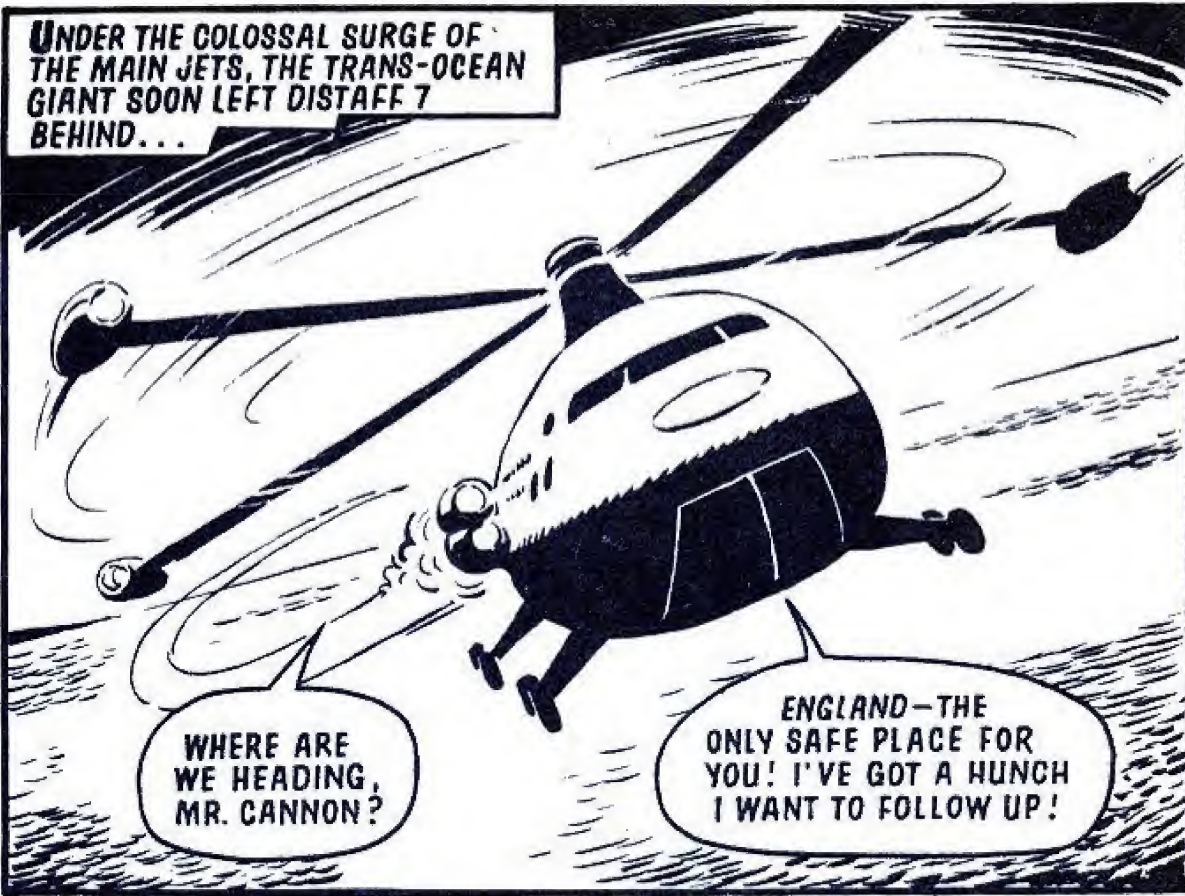
QUICK—GET
INTO THAT TRANS-
OCEAN 'COPTER! WE
CAN SETTLE THE
BILL LATER!



THE 'COPTER WITH BOB AT THE CONTROLS WAS AIRBORNE WITHIN SECONDS...



UNDER THE COLOSSAL SURGE OF THE MAIN JETS, THE TRANS-OCEAN GIANT SOON LEFT DISTAFF 7 BEHIND...



WHERE ARE WE HEADING, MR. CANNON?

ENGLAND—THE ONLY SAFE PLACE FOR YOU! I'VE GOT A HUNCH I WANT TO FOLLOW UP!

FIVE HOURS LATER, BOB CANNON WAS REDUCING POWER ON THE APPROACH TO LONDON'S AIRPORT...



HELLO, CONTROL! REQUEST PERMISSION TO LAND!

WE HAVE BEEN EXPECTING YOU! PLEASE SETTLE ON BERTH 3 IN FRONT OF THE CUSTOMS BUILDING. AN ESCORT IS WAITING!

AND SO...



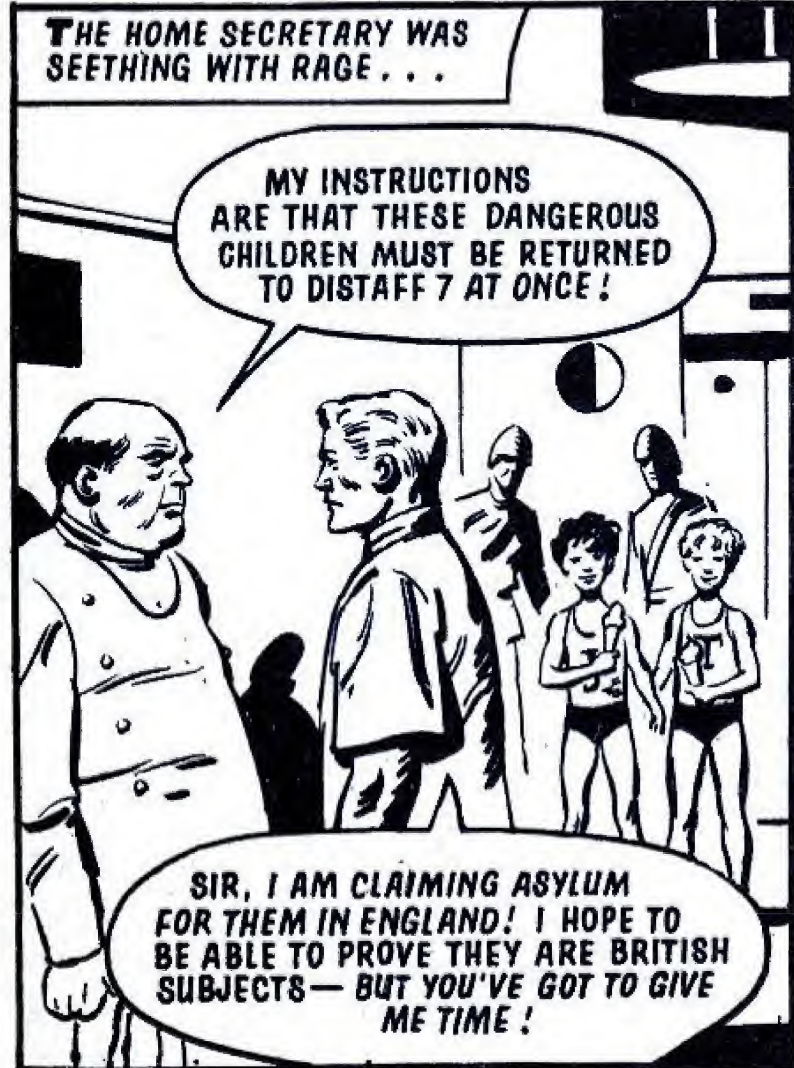
H'MM—IT LOOKS AS THOUGH TRAGGMAN HAS BEEN BUSY ON THE INTERCONTINENTAL TELECOM...

YOU'VE CAUSED AN INTERNATIONAL INCIDENT, MR. CANNON! THE HOME SECRETARY IS WAITING TO SEE YOU AT CUSTOMS!

GEE, LONDON!

WE SURE GET AROUND!

THE HOME SECRETARY WAS SEETHING WITH RAGE...



MY INSTRUCTIONS ARE THAT THESE DANGEROUS CHILDREN MUST BE RETURNED TO DISTAFF 7 AT ONCE!

SIR, I AM CLAIMING ASYLUM FOR THEM IN ENGLAND! I HOPE TO BE ABLE TO PROVE THEY ARE BRITISH SUBJECTS—BUT YOU'VE GOT TO GIVE ME TIME!

LUCKILY, THE HOME SECRETARY WAS A REASONABLE MAN. BUT...



ER—YOU SAY THEY HAVE A GRANDFATHER NOW LIVING ON KOSMA, AND THEIR PARENTS CAME FROM BRITAIN? VERY WELL, CANNON—I GIVE YOU FIVE DAYS TO FIND LIVING RELATIVES WHO WILL VOUCH FOR THEM! IN THE MEANTIME, THEY MUST STAY IN CUSTODY!

THAT'S ALL I ASK, SIR!

JAK AND TIFFY WERE LED AWAY...



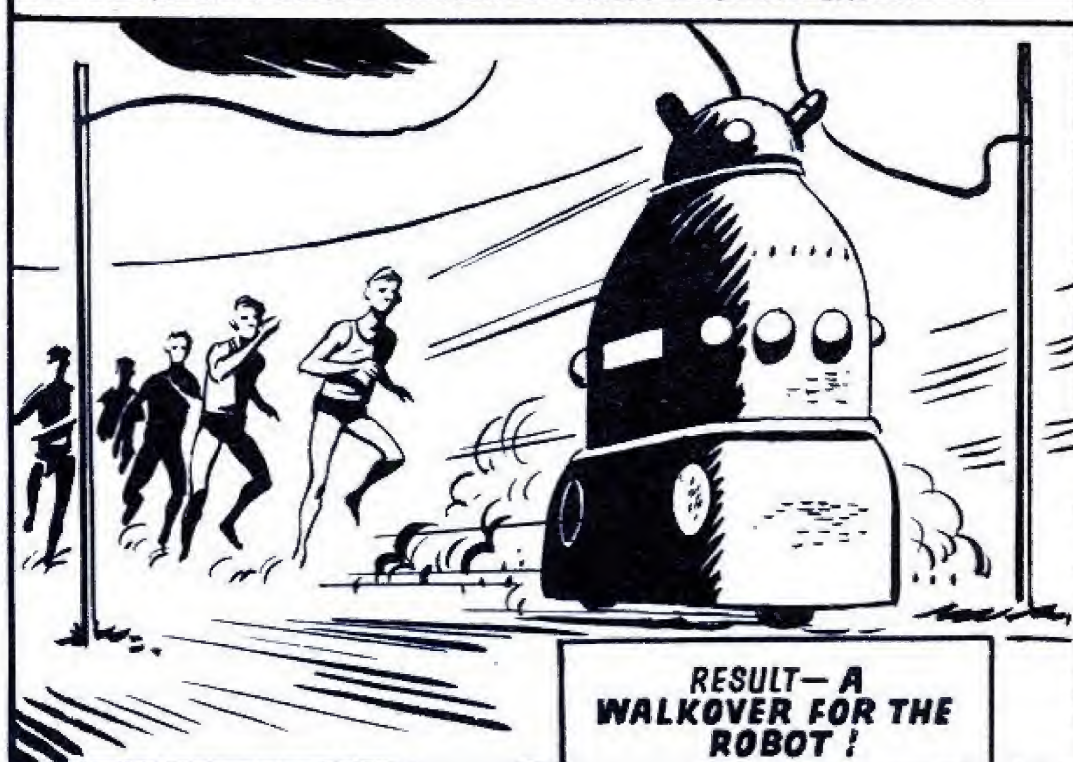
DON'T WORRY, KIDS—WHEREVER YOU'RE GOING, I'LL SOON HAVE YOU OUT! BUT FOR PETE'S SAKE, DON'T GET ROUGH!

IT WON'T BE AS BAD AS DISTAFF 7, CANNON—BUT THE LAW IS THE LAW! AS FOR KIDS GETTING ROUGH, YOU MUST BE JOKING!

AT THAT MOMENT, AT A NEARBY HUGE UNDERGROUND SPORTS STADIUM, A NEW TRAINING ROUTINE WAS IN PROGRESS FOR THE HUNDRED YARDS, USING A ROBOT PACER COMPUTED TO MOVE AT WORLD RECORD SPEED...



THE CRASH OF THE STARTING PISTOL ACTIVATED THE ROBOT'S ACOUSTIC EQUIPMENT AT THE SAME INSTANT AS THE RUNNERS LEAPED FROM THEIR BLOCKS. SECONDS LATER...



ANDY BRYCE, THE FIERY OLD BRITISH TRAINER, WAS AS DESPONDENT AS USUAL...

IT'S THE OLD STORY-- AND IT'S THE SAME WITH THE JAVELIN, THE DISCUS, AND THE POLE VAULT! ALL RIGHT, WHEEL THE BOX OF TRICKS BACK TO ITS STABLE! WE'RE STILL OUT OF THE RUNNING AS A FIRST CLASS SPORTS TEAM!



AT THAT MOMENT, IN WALKED BOB CANNON...

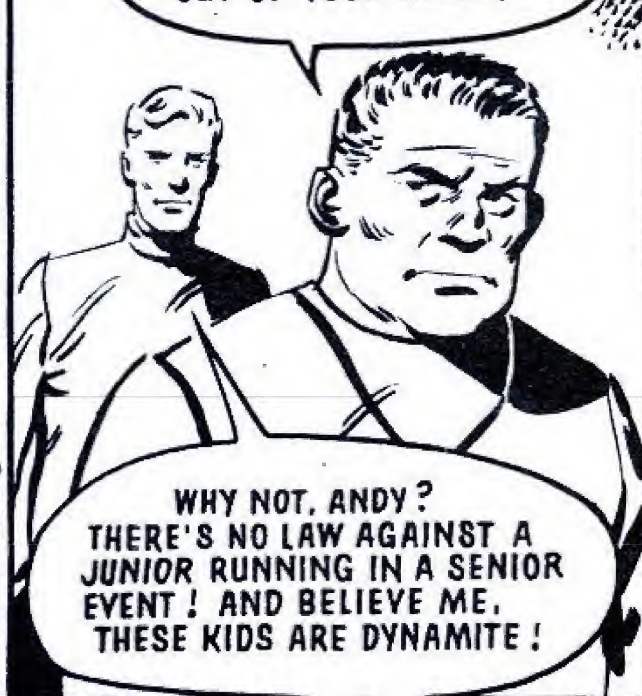
STILL AS CRUSTY AS EVER, ANDY?

HELLO, CANNON! IF YOU'VE COME OVER FROM SOUTH AMERICA FOR A JOB, WE NEED RUNNERS, NOT TRAINERS!

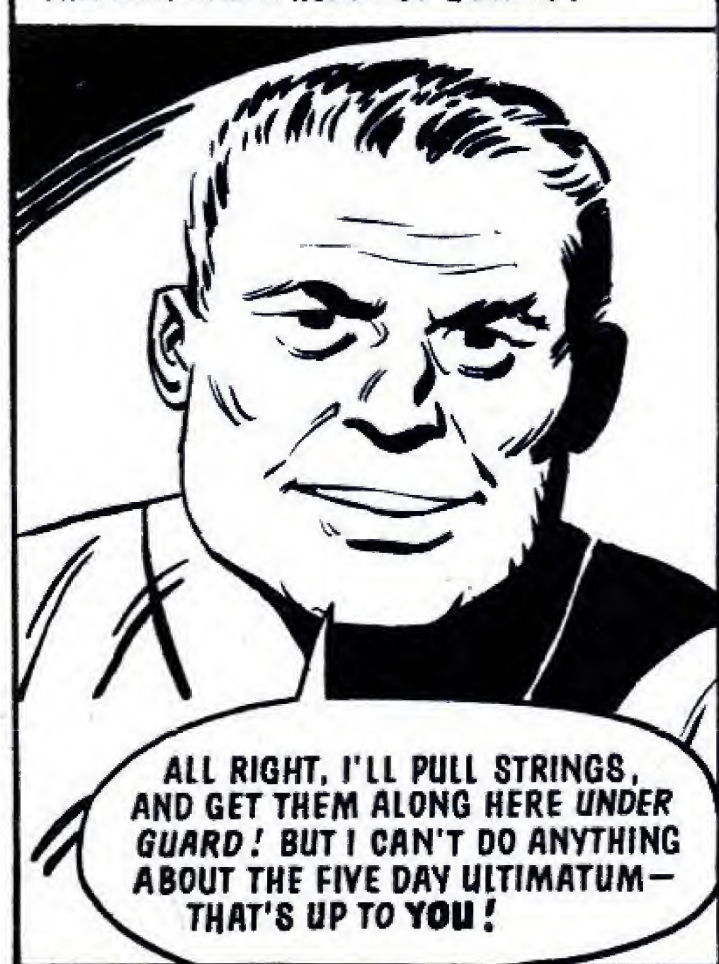


WITH A FEW CRISP WORDS, BOB TOLD THE STORY OF THE AMAZING KIDS FROM KOSMA...

A COUPLE OF YOUNGSTERS IN WORLD SPORT? CANNON, YOU'RE OUT OF YOUR HEAD!



DESPITE HIS ROUGH MANNER, THE OLD TRAINER HAD A HEART OF GOLD...

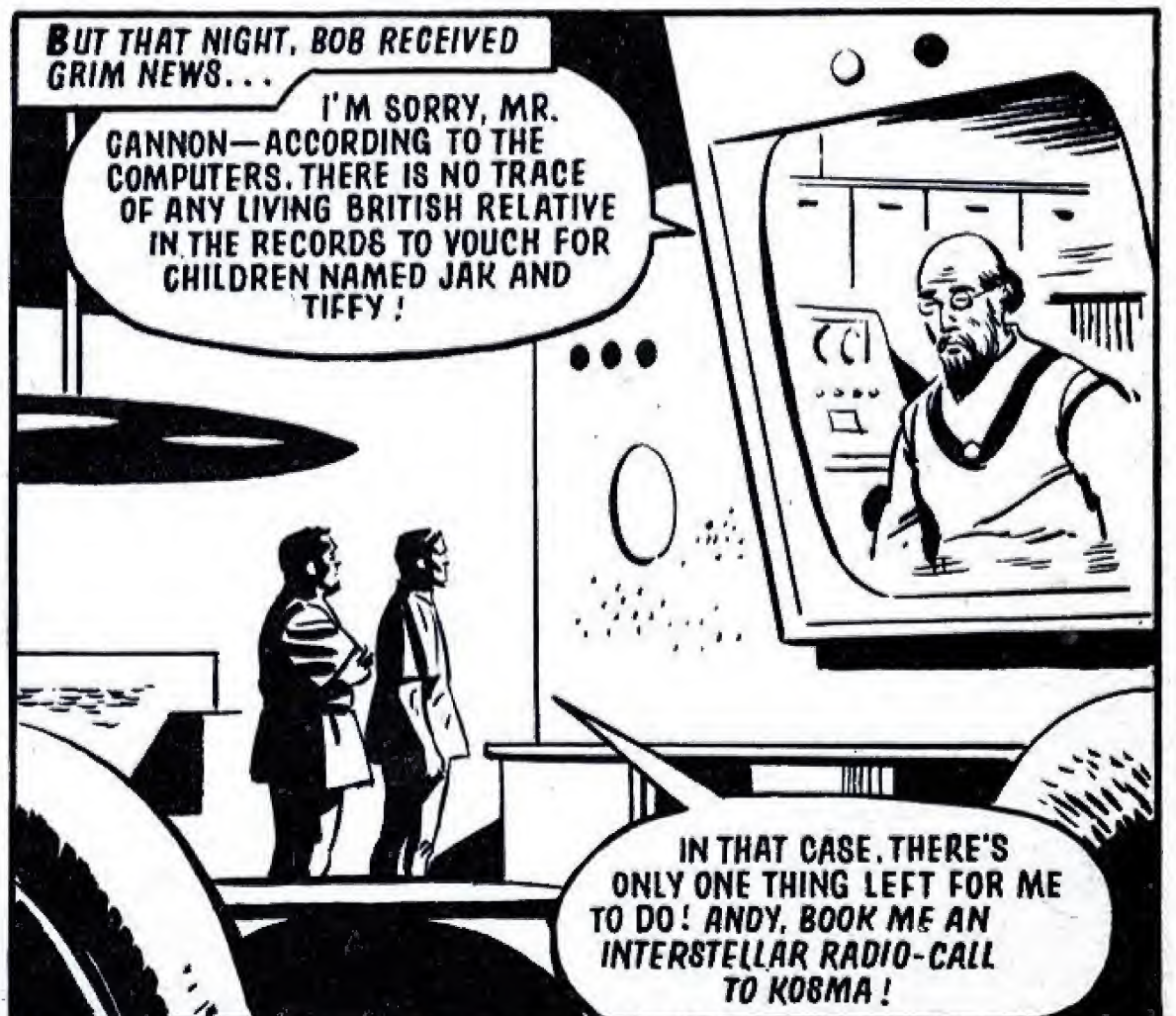
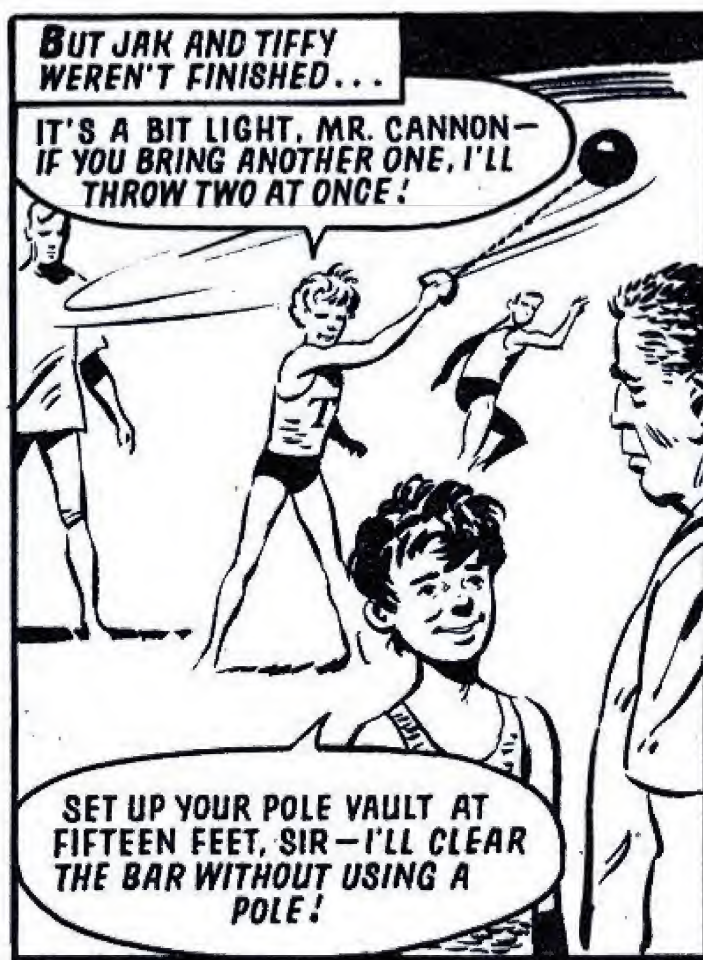
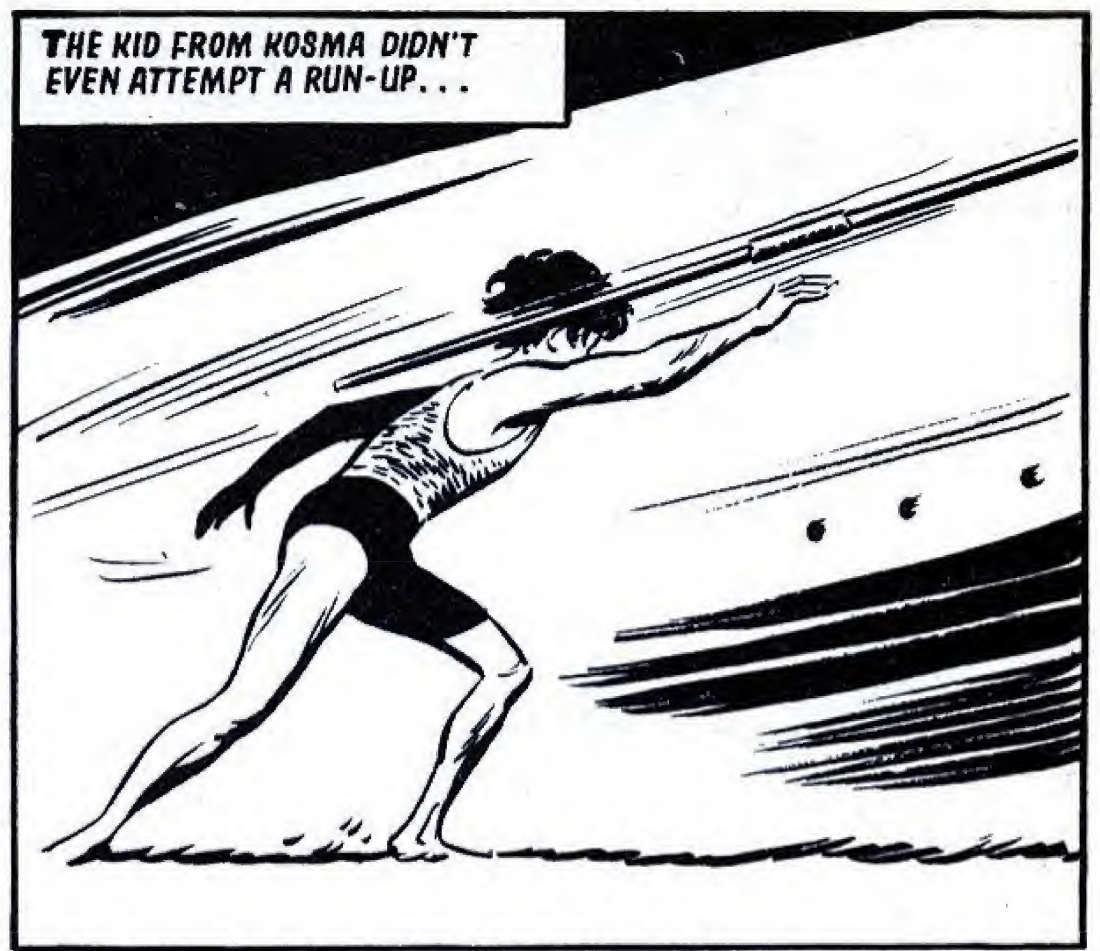


AN HOUR LATER...

GEE, LOOK WHERE THEY'VE BROUGHT US!

THIS LOOKS FUN!





WHILE BOB CANNON WAS IN ANOTHER ROOM SPEAKING TO KOSMA, ANDY BRYCE, THE OLD TRAINER, TALKED TO THE HOME SECRETARY OVER THE TELESCAN...

REALLY, BRYCE, THIS IS MOST IRREGULAR—BUT AS YOU SAY, IT'S FOR THE GOOD OF BRITISH SPORT! VERY WELL, THE KOSMA CHILDREN CAN GO TO NEW YORK UNDER ESCORT—BUT I WARN YOU, IF THE DISTAFF 7 PEOPLE TRY TO GET THEM BACK WHILE THEY ARE THERE, I CAN DO NOTHING!

THANKS, SIR!

AND SO, WHEN THE BRITISH SPORTS TEAM BOARDED THE TRANSATLANTIC ORBITAL GLIDER, TWENTY FOUR HOURS LATER...

HEY, THEY'RE TAKING THE KOSMANIAN KIDS WITH THEM!

THE PRESS AND TELEVISION MEN ARE ON TO US! IF THEY MAKE A WORLD WIDE REPORT, AND TRAGGMAN HEARS IT...!

DON'T WORRY, BOB, WE'LL HANDLE THAT WHEN IT HAPPENS!

TWO HOURS LATER, THE HUGE GLIDER WAS HURTLING DOWN THROUGH THE STRATOSPHERE TOWARDS NEW YORK...

STOP WORRYING, BOB. THERE'S BEEN NOTHING ON THE GLIDER TELEVIEW ABOUT THE KIDS!

YOU FORGET ONE THING, ANDY—TRAGGMAN AND HIS TEAM WILL BE AT THE NEW YORK FINALS, ANYWAY! IT'S BEEN A HIGH SPOT FOR THE CORRECTIVE CENTRE FOR YEARS!

BUT THERE WAS NO TROUBLE AT NEW YORK'S STRATOPORT. AND FINALLY, WHEN THEY ENTERED THE HUGE STADIUM...

DO WE GET AN ICE CREAM?

YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE IN TRAINING!

ANDY, THESE KIDS DON'T NEED ANY TRAINING! AND ANYWAY, THE TEN THOUSAND METRES ISN'T UNTIL TOMORROW—SO I THINK WE CAN STRETCH A POINT!

BRYCE AND BOB CANNON HAD AGREED THAT THE TEN THOUSAND METRES WOULD BE IDEAL PROOF TO THE WORLD OF THE BOYS' AMAZING KOSMANIAN STAMINA. NEXT MORNING...

OKAY, YOUNGSTERS—NOW YOU CAN SHOW US ALL HOW A REAL RACE IS WON!

BUT THEN...

I DON'T THINK SO, CANNON! MEN, SEIZE THOSE BOYS AND TAKE THEM TO MY MINICOPTER!

TRAGGMAN!

BUT IT WAS JAK AND TIFFY WHO MADE THE FIRST MOVE!

QUICK, MR. CANNON—LET'S GET PAST OUT INTO THE STADIUM!

THEY WON'T DARE GRAB US IN FRONT OF THE CROWD—NOT TILL THE RACE HAS BEEN RUN!

AS THE TWO KIDS FLASHED INTO THE OPEN, AN AMUSED MURMUR CAME FROM THE CROWDED STANDS. IT WAS AS TIFFY HAD SAID — NEW YORK WAS AGOG WITH THE NEWS ABOUT THE JUNIOR BRITISH ATHLETES...



JUST AS THE RACE WAS STARTING, A MAN FROM THE CROWD GOT PAST THE ASTONISHED ATTENDANTS...

FANCY AN ICED LOLLY, KIDS — JUST TO KEEP YOU COOL?

SURE THING — WHY NOT?

GEE, THANKS!



AND THE CROWD ROARED! MEANWHILE...

YOU CAN'T STOP US, CANNON — WE'LL GRAB THEM AFTER THIS FOOLISH RACE IS OVER! THEY BELONG TO DISTAFF 7!



THEN I'M WARNING YOU, TRAGGMAN — YOU'VE GOT A FIGHT ON YOUR HANDS! WHERE THE KIDS GO, I GO!

TO THE UTTER AMAZEMENT OF THE NEW YORKERS, JAK AND TIFFY BEGAN TO SHOOT AHEAD IN THE RACE...

THIS IS GREAT STUFF!

BUT I DON'T THINK MR. CANNON WILL BE PLEASED! TIME WE PUT ON A SHOW!



THROWING AWAY THE REMAINS OF THE LOLLIES, THEY LENGTHENED THEIR STRIDE...



IT'S FANTASTIC — AMAZING — UNBELIEVABLE! FOLKS, THESE TWO LITTLE KIDS ARE MAKING THE GREATEST RUNNERS IN THE WORLD LOOK LIKE TORTOISES!

IN ANOTHER FEW MINUTES, THE KOSMANIAN KIDS HAD LAPPED THE FIELD!

FINDING IT HARD GOING, SIR?



WHY NOT TRY AN ICED LOLLY?

THE CROWD ROARED WITH DELIGHT...

IT'S A CIRCUS TRICK! THEY'RE DWARFS IN DISGUISE!

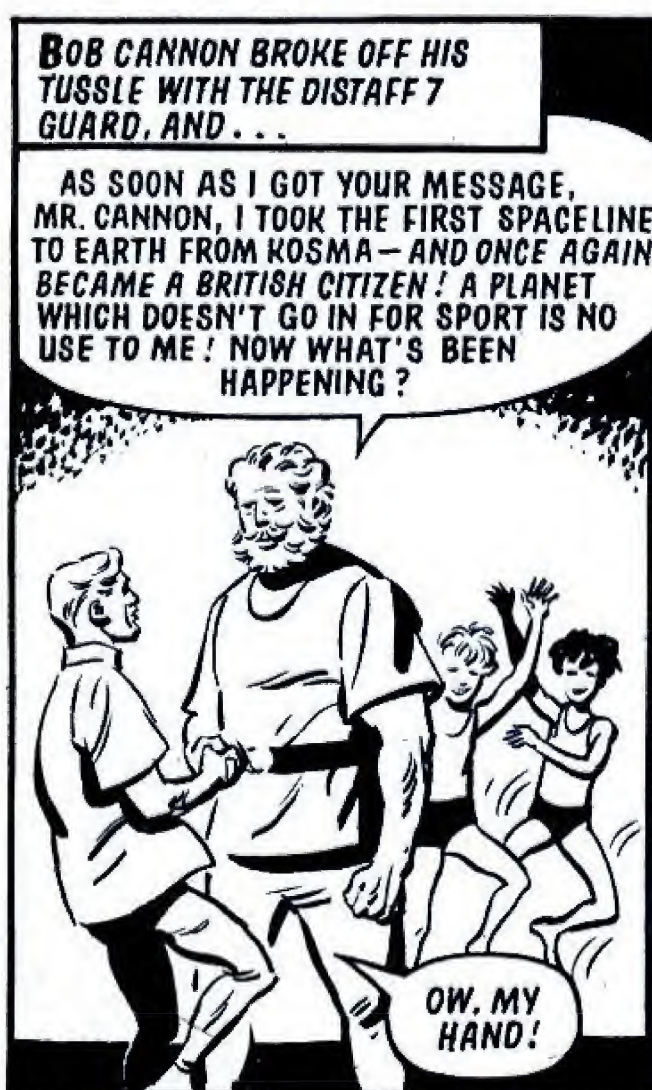
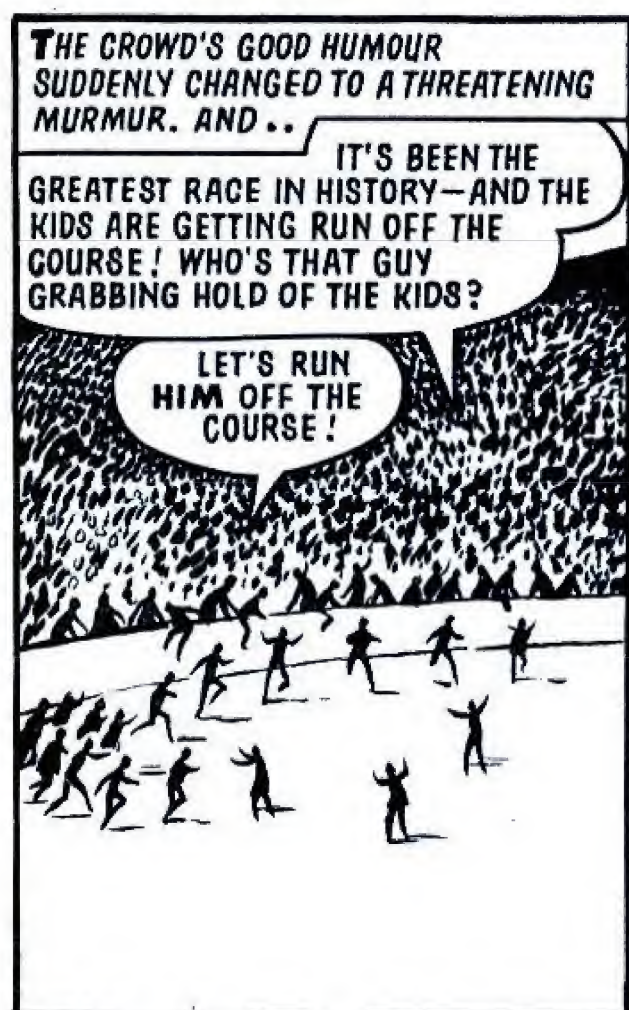
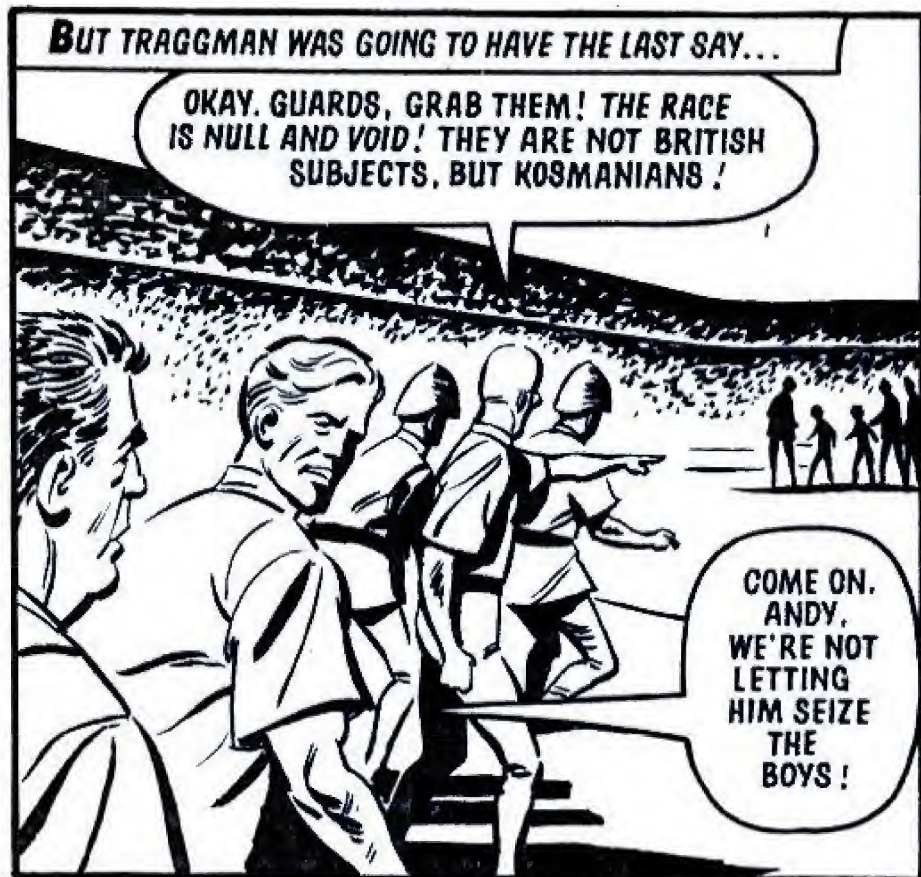
EVER SEEN A DWARF RUN TEN THOUSAND METRES BEFORE — AND BEAT THE WORLD?

GIVE THEM SOME MORE LOLLIES!



THE RACE HAD BECOME A FARCE! AT THE FINISH, THE KIDS FROM KOSMA HAD NOT ONLY BROKEN ALL RECORDS, BUT LAPPED THE FIELD TWICE! AS THEY CAME UP TO THE TAPE, ALL THE OTHER RUNNERS RETIRED...





DROPPING IN FROM

PRESSURE SUIT

An American Air Force type full-pressure suit, similar to that used by astronauts, would be modified for the strato-jump and would cost the equivalent of £4,000. The helmet would have an electrically-heated visor.

MAIN PARACHUTE

A specially designed 24-foot slow descent rate 'chute would have a forward speed of 13-15 m.p.h. in calm air. Fitted with automatic and manual 'chute openers, it would operate at 6,500 feet, 4 min. 22 secs. after bale-out.

FREE-FALL OXYGEN UNIT

A bale-out oxygen breathing system would be carried in the main parachute container and would start operating minutes before the jump.

DROGUE 'CHUTE

A 6-foot hemistflo drogue 'chute would be used only in an emergency. It would stabilise the jumper and prevent spinning during the descent. This 'chute is believed to be less effective than "free fall" flying for stabilising the body.

RESERVE PARACHUTE

This 28-foot modified military 'chute would give the jumper maximum manoeuvrability and would open automatically at 4,000 feet.

ALTITUDE MEASURING DEVICE

The descent rate of the parachutist would be measured and recorded by this gadget. A battery-powered transmitter would send signals to an electronics van on the ground. The device would be housed in the reserve parachute pack.

TAPE RECORDER

During free fall, the parachutist could transmit his reactions into a tape recorder carried in the leg pocket of his pressure suit.

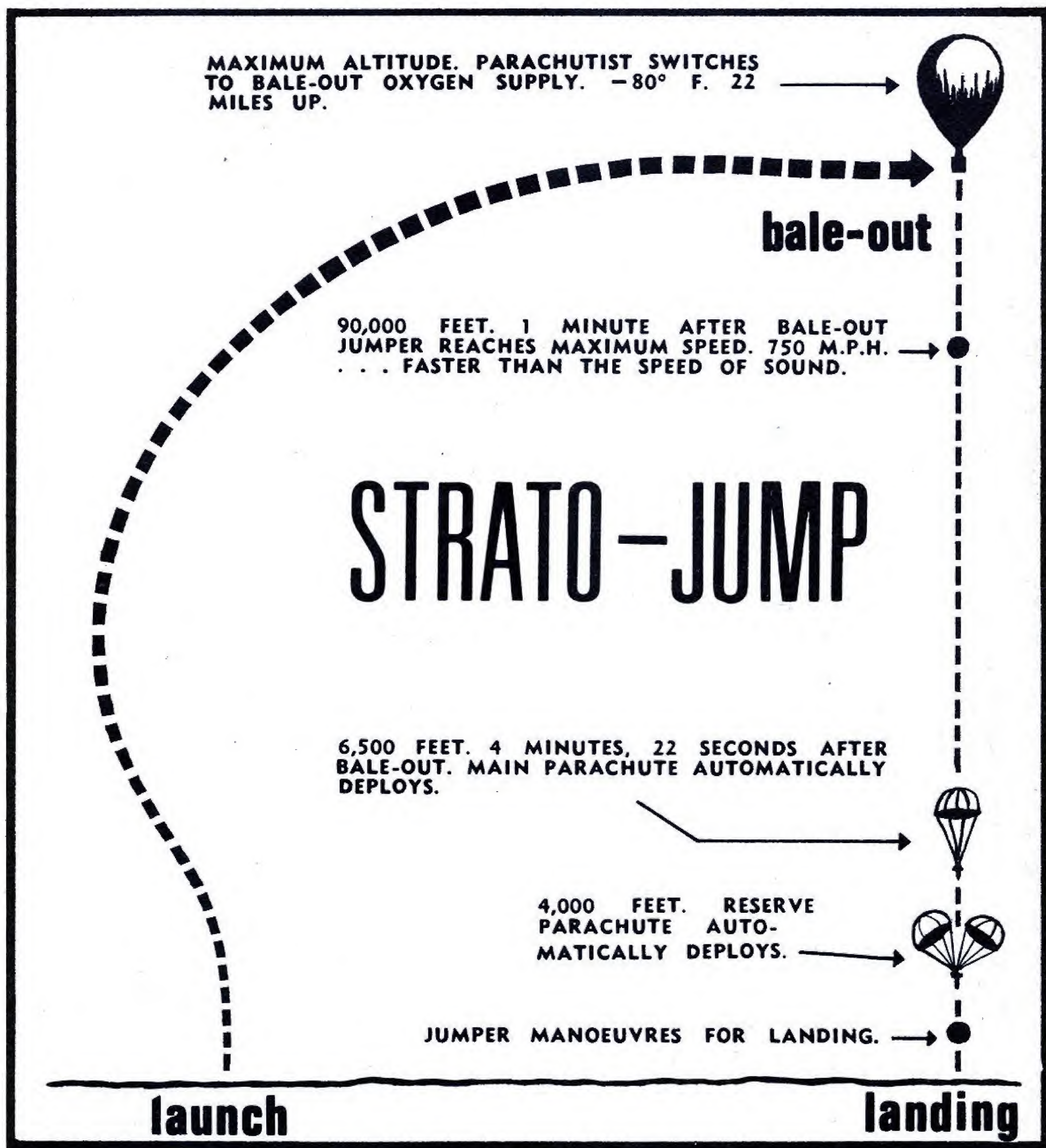


THE first real parachutists in the world were men who jumped from captive balloons. This was during the First World War. The fighter pilots of this era were real do-or-die heroes, for if a plane was shot up in a dogfight the only hope of survival the

pilot had was to make a crash-landing. No parachute was issued to a pilot, and in fact the "high authorities" of the time resisted its introduction into the Royal Flying Corps.

But the observers who went up in captive balloons behind the front line, to dangle in

THE EDGE OF SPACE



a basket at a height of 1,000 feet, were issued with parachutes. The reason was that they had probably no chance of escape if the balloon was shot up. If the great hydrogen-filled gas-bag was pierced by tracer bullets, it would turn into a blazing furnace within moments.

The 'chute used was attached to the balloon-basket by a static line, and the observers jumped over the side.

It is a peculiar trick of fate that the latest attempts on a *high-altitude parachute jump* are also to be made from a balloon!



These attempts will be made in the United States. And there is a practical reason for them, as well as breaking the high-altitude record. They are to find out if it is possible for an astronaut or pilot of a high-altitude aircraft to bale out and then *make a free fall of 18 miles* before opening his 'chute.

For a parachute drop through rarified air is far more tricky than it sounds. If the parachutist opens his 'chute too soon, and there isn't enough air to fill out the canopy, the lines will tangle underneath the collapsed and whirling 'chute, and it will never open at all.

Therefore the parachutist takes with him an oxygen supply, and an altimeter, and doesn't pull the ripcord until he has dropped to a height at which he knows there is enough air to fill the 'chute.

But then his major problem is that as he falls he goes into a spin—and if this spin increases, he will black out, and may never recover consciousness before he hits the ground.

During the Second World War, a French paratrooper solved this problem of spinning. He discovered that if you stretched your arms and legs out as you were falling, so that you were spreadeagled, this stopped the spin entirely. In fact, if you were falling from a great enough height, and had enough time, you could manoeuvre yourself around in the air, as if you were a bird, by moving your arms and legs. It was even possible to turn yourself over on your back, and lie quite comfortably on a cushion of air, as you fell !

But the problem at really high altitudes is—will there be enough air for this technique to work? And just in case it doesn't, the jumper will carry with him a special drogue 'chute, to be opened up if he goes into a spin so dangerous that it can't be controlled.

The balloon used for the ascent is a modified high-altitude balloon, filled with helium. At ground-level, the shimmering plastic gasbag is like a great drawn-out pear-drop, with the gas clustering at the top, and the gasbag beneath hanging in folds. But as the balloon rises into rarified air, and the air pressure outside the balloon drops, the helium inside the balloon begins to expand.

At a height of about 20 miles, the gasbag has expanded into a huge sphere !

The gondola under this gasbag will be of the simplest and lightest construction, not much more than an alloy framework with a floor to stand on, and some kind of covering. And the jumper will just step off the framework.

His kit for this fantastic jump? An American Air Force type full pressure suit. For he is practically on the verge of space.

The jump, if successful, will beat the existing United States high-altitude jump record by three and a half miles. And the man who makes the jump will also have become the world's highest-ever balloonist.

As soon as he steps off the balloon gondola, 22 miles above the Earth, he will dictate everything that happens during the drop into a tape recorder strapped to the leg of his suit.

There will be no wind resistance, in fact no real sense of falling at all. He will be like an astronaut who has just stepped out of a capsule. Above him will be the starry darkness of interplanetary space. Below, the Earth will stretch out like an unreal map towards the slightly curving horizon.

But he is falling fast. And before a few minutes have passed he will have accelerated almost to the speed of sound ! And though the air at high altitudes is rarified, he will rapidly become aware of the increasing pressure.

During this period he will use the spread-eagled stabilising technique.

As he drops into the levels of denser air, his rate of fall will *slow*, as the air resistance builds up. And he will finally reach what is the stable terminal velocity of any body normally falling through air—120 m.p.h.

If his emergency drogue 'chute has to be used at all, it will be during this period of free fall.

Now the clouds, which seemed motionless several seconds before, will appear to rush up to meet him and, as he falls through the thick white fog at an incredible speed, he will be able to see neither earth nor sky—but the worst is over.

Soon he will be confronted by a fantastic, panoramic view of the countryside as he falls to meet it. Probably helicopters will circle round him, their crews watching carefully in case of emergency . . .

After approximately four minutes, his main parachute will open automatically at 6,500 feet.

Then, at 4,000 feet, his reserve 'chute will open—also automatically.

The parachutist will make a gentle touchdown, eight minutes after stepping off into space—a world record breaker !



CAPTAIN HURRICANE

UNHERALDED, ITS SOURCE UNKNOWN, THE DEADLY ATTACK CONTINUED...



GREAT BLISTERIN' BULWARKS!

WAAH! WHO THREW THAT EARTHQUAKE?

SOME MONTHS AFTER THE ALLIED LANDINGS IN FRANCE IN 1944, THE INVINCIBLE CAPTAIN HERCULES HURRICANE OF THE ROYAL MARINE COMMANDOS AND HIS PINT-SIZED BATMAN, MAGGOT MALONE, WERE STATIONED IN SOUTHERN ENGLAND. AT THAT TIME, VIOLENT AND MYSTERIOUS EXPLOSIONS ROCKED THE HOME COUNTIES...

MAGGOT HAD HIS OWN PET THEORY...



I RECKON IT'S EXPLODING GAS MAINS, SKIPPER!

GAH! YOU WOULD THINK OF SOME BARMY EXPLANATION LIKE THAT, MUTTON-HEAD!

EXCUSE ME, SIR - THE C.O. WANTS YOU URGENTLY!

JOINING A TOP SECURITY CONFERENCE, HURRICANE LEARNT THE TRUTH...



CAPTAIN, THESE EXPLOSIONS ARE CAUSED BY A GERMAN NEW SECRET ROCKET, KNOWN AS V2! THE MAIN FIRING SITE IS SOME MILES BEHIND THE JERRY FRONT LINE, IN HOLLAND!



WE WANT YOU TO ALLOW YOURSELF TO BE CAPTURED, HURRICANE! YOU WILL CARRY FAKE BRITISH PLANS, INDICATING THAT OUR NEXT BIG PUSH OUT IN FRANCE WILL GO NOWHERE NEAR THE ROCKET SITE!

WE HOPE THESE FAKE PLANS WILL LULL THE NAZIS INTO A FALSE SENSE OF SECURITY... BECAUSE LATER WE SHALL LAUNCH A SURPRISE ATTACK ON THE SITE!



AYE, AYE, SIR - LEAVE IT TO ME!

DELIBERATE CAPTURE WAS RISKY,
SO HURRICANE'S MISSION WAS
VEILED IN SECRECY...



I'M TAKING
YOU AS FAR AS
NORTHERN FRANCE, TICH!
AFTER THAT I WON'T
BE NEEDING YOU
FOR A BIT!

MAGGOT WAS HURT AND INDIGNANT...



THE CAP'N
CAN'T FOOL ME!
'E'S OFF ON SOME SPECIAL
MISSION... AND LEAVIN'
'IS FAITHFUL BATMAN
BEHIND!

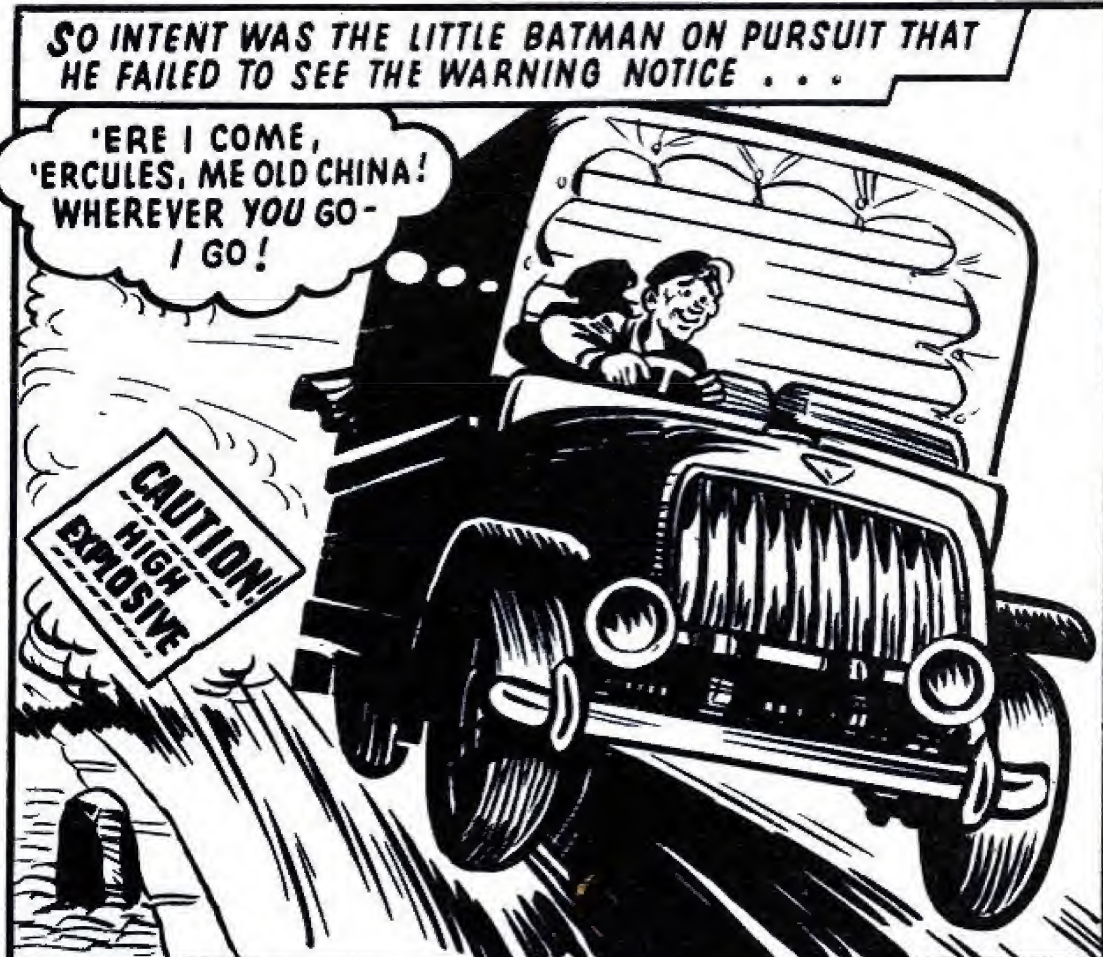
IT'S A DIABOLICAL
LIBERTY - 'E CAN'T
GET ON WITHOUT ME!
I'LL FOLLOW 'IM,
THAT'S WHAT
I'LL DO!



CAUTION!
HIGH
EXPLOSIVE

SO INTENT WAS THE LITTLE BATMAN ON PURSUIT THAT
HE FAILED TO SEE THE WARNING NOTICE...

'ERE I COME,
'ERCULES, ME OLD CHINA!
WHEREVER YOU GO -
I GO!



THE MASSIVE MARINE WAS ALSO
ABSORBED WITH HIS THOUGHTS...



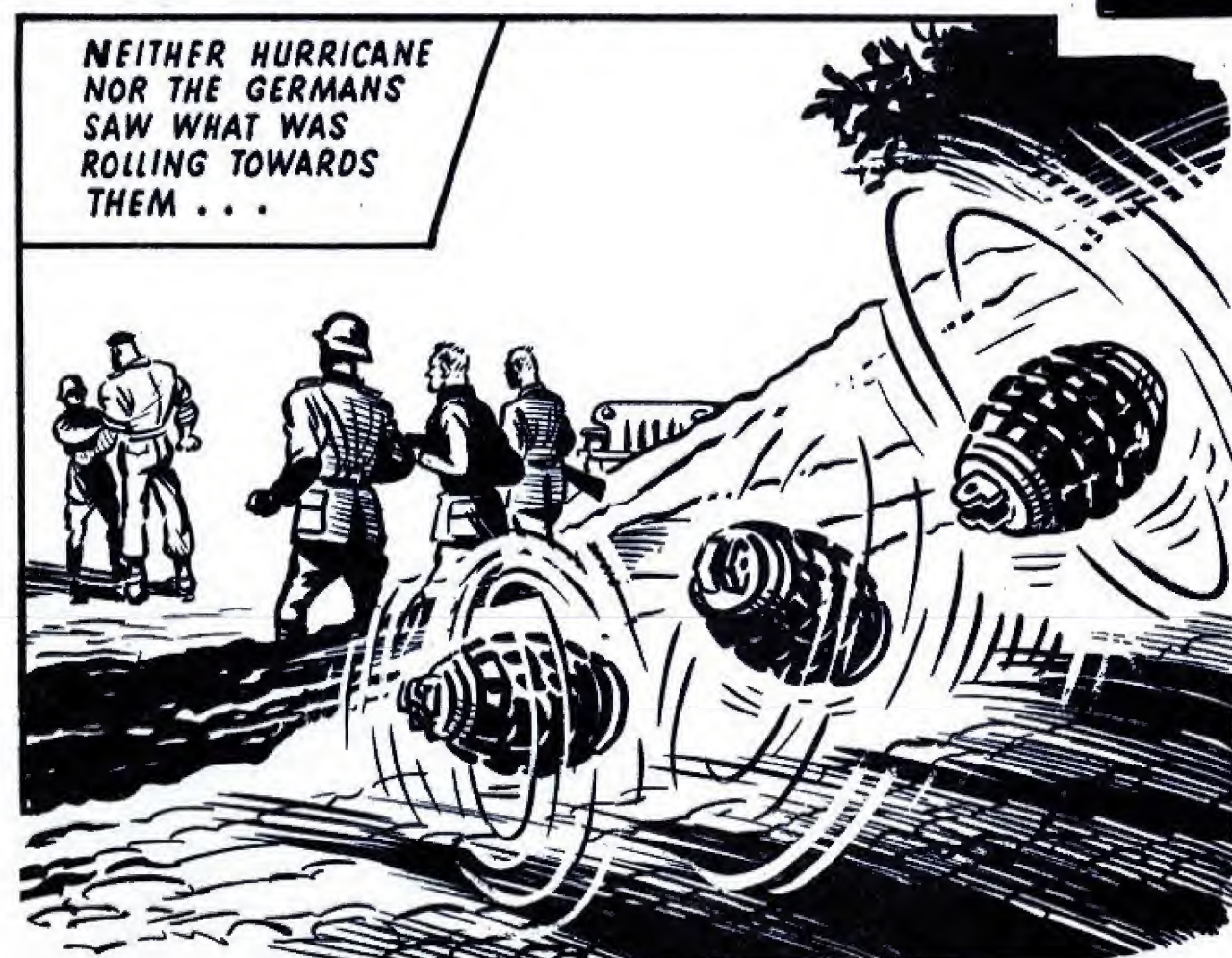
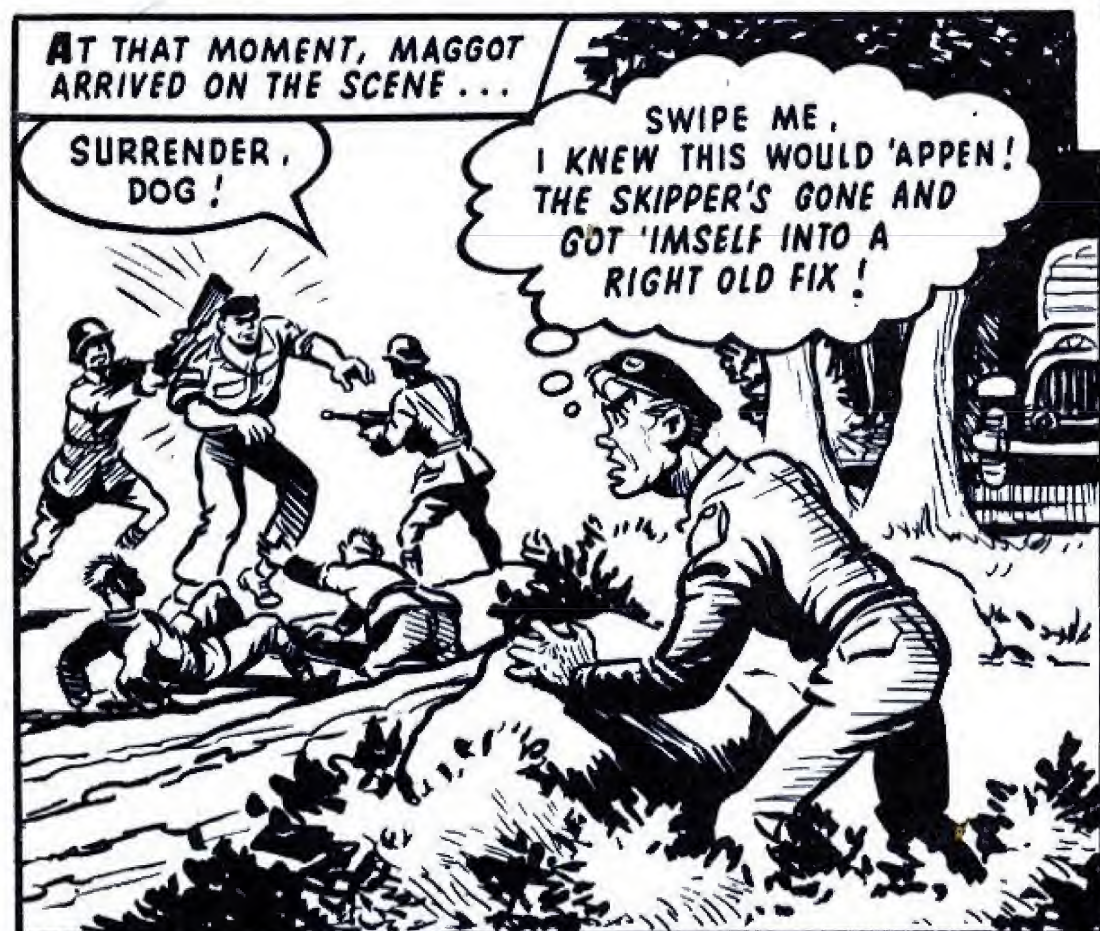
SCUPPER ME!
I DON'T LIKE
SURRENDERING TO PRUSSIAN
PERISHERS, BUT THEY'VE
GOT TO FIND THOSE
FAKE PAPERS ON ME!

AND SOON, INSIDE ENEMY-
HELD HOLLAND...

ACHTUNG!
A BRITISCHER!



AH, HA!
HERE'S A BUNCH
OF JELLY-KNEED SWABS -
BUT I'D BETTER NOT
GIVE IN TOO
EASILY!



TWO EXPLOSIONS BROKE OUT TOGETHER—ONE LARGE AND ONE SMALL!

TEUFEL—!

WHAT THE...?

EEEEEE!

THE BIG MAN WAS ASTOUNDED!

SUFFERING CATFISH! HOW THE THUMP DID THAT HAPPEN?

BUT THE GIANT COMMANDO WAS DETERMINED TO CARRY OUT HIS VITAL MISSION...

SHIVER ME TIMBERS, A MARINE CAN'T SURRENDER TO ONE UNDERSIZED HUN! I'LL HAVE TO FIND SOME MORE OF THE SWABS!

OOOF!

AND BY THE TIME MAGGOT HAD RECOVERED FROM THE EFFECTS OF THE BLAST...

CRIKEY! 'E'S BELTIN' OFF AGAIN!

THE CHASE WAS RESUMED—AT TOP SPEED!

WHERE THE 'ECK'S THE BIG LUMP GOIN'? DON'T 'E KNOW THERE'LL BE JERRIES EVERYWHERE HERE IN HOLLAND?

MAGGOT SOON FOUND EVIDENCE TO PROVE HIS WORDS...

HIMMEL... HERE COMES ANOTHER BRITISCHER!

SHOOT HIM!

BRAVING THE HAIL OF FIRE, THE GALLANT LITTLE BATMAN DROVE ON. THEN SUDDENLY...

L-LOR LUVADUCK! W-WHAT'S THAT FLAMIN' GREAT THING?

ONE SHOCK WAS FOLLOWED BY ANOTHER!

OH, NO!
THE SKIPPER'S
FALLEN INTO
JERRY HANDS
AGAIN!

A SHATTERING BELLOW RANG OUT...

SO HELP ME, YOU'RE NOT
STUDYING THOSE PLANS, YOU SAUSAGE-
EATING RABBLE! I'LL MAKE MINCEMEAT
OUT OF YOU FIRST!

HOLD
HIM, YOU
FOOLS!

HURRICANE HAD NOT EXPECTED TO FIND THE
ROCKET SITE ITSELF— BUT HE WAS SECRETLY
SATISFIED...

ACH, THE ENGLANDER
HAS SOME SECRET PAPERS,
HERR LEUTNANT!

GOOD! THIS IS
WHERE I PUT ON
A LITTLE ACT FOR
THESE GOOSE-STEPPING
MONKEYS!

MAGGOT TOOK IN THE SITUATION
AT A GLANCE— OR THOUGHT HE DID!

SWIPE ME,
THE SKIPPER'S TRYIN'
TO PROTECT SOME
SECRET DOCUMENTS...

'OLD ON, CAP'N...
I'M COMIN'!

I'VE GOT
THE PLANS, SIR!
'OP ABOARD!

MALONE!
WHAT
THE...?

YOU
INTERFERIN',
MISERABLE LITTLE
TADPOLE! YOU'VE GONE
AND SPOILT THE WHOLE
PERISHIN' OPERATION!

A RED MIST FLOATED BEFORE HERCULES HURRICANE'S EYES AND HE ERUPTED INTO A TERRIBLE "RAGIN' FURY"!

GREAT BLISTERIN' BULWARKS! YOU'LL PAY FOR THIS, FLANNEL-BRAIN! GET READY FOR THE CLOBBERING OF ALL TIME!

T-TAKE IT EASY, CAP'N! I-I ONLY MEANT TO 'ELP!

BUT THE GRENADE MISSED THE TWO MARINES— AND HIT THE MOVING TRUCK OF HIGH EXPLOSIVES!

AND AS THE THUNDERING ECHOES DIED AWAY ...

LUMME! WHERE'S THAT BLOOMIN' ROCKET GONE, SKIPPER?

RIGHT UP, TICH! THAT'S ONE SITE THOSE SNEAKY SWABS WON'T BE USING AGAIN!

SOMEHOW, THE QUAKING LITTLE BATMAN BROKE FREE ...

ACHTUNG! THE BRITISCHERS ARE ESCAPING!

COME BACK 'ERE AND TAKE YOUR MEDICINE LIKE A REAL MARINE, YOU LILY-LIVERED LANDLUBBER!

WAAW! KEEP OFF! PICK ON SOME-ONE YOUR OWN SIZE!

THIS GRENADE WILL SOON STOP THE PIGDOGS!

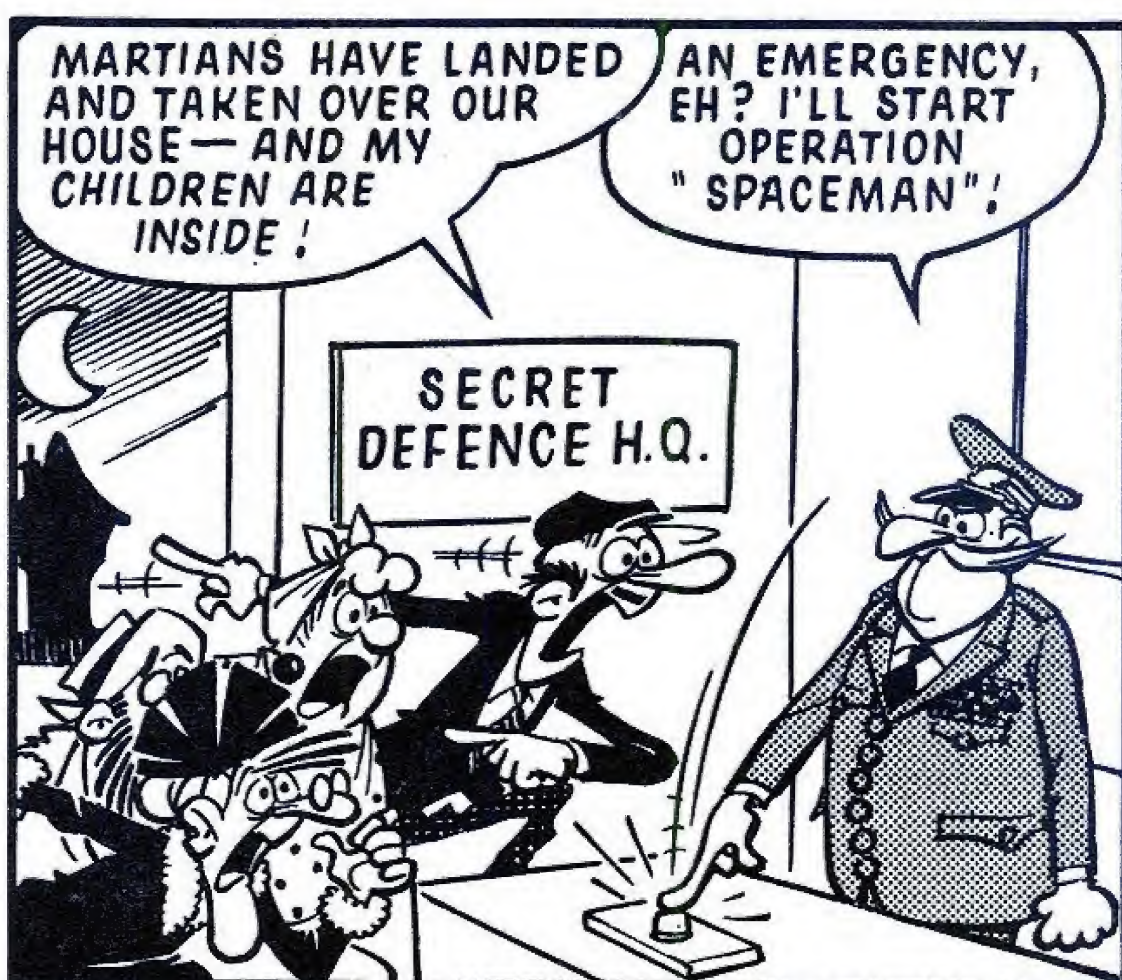
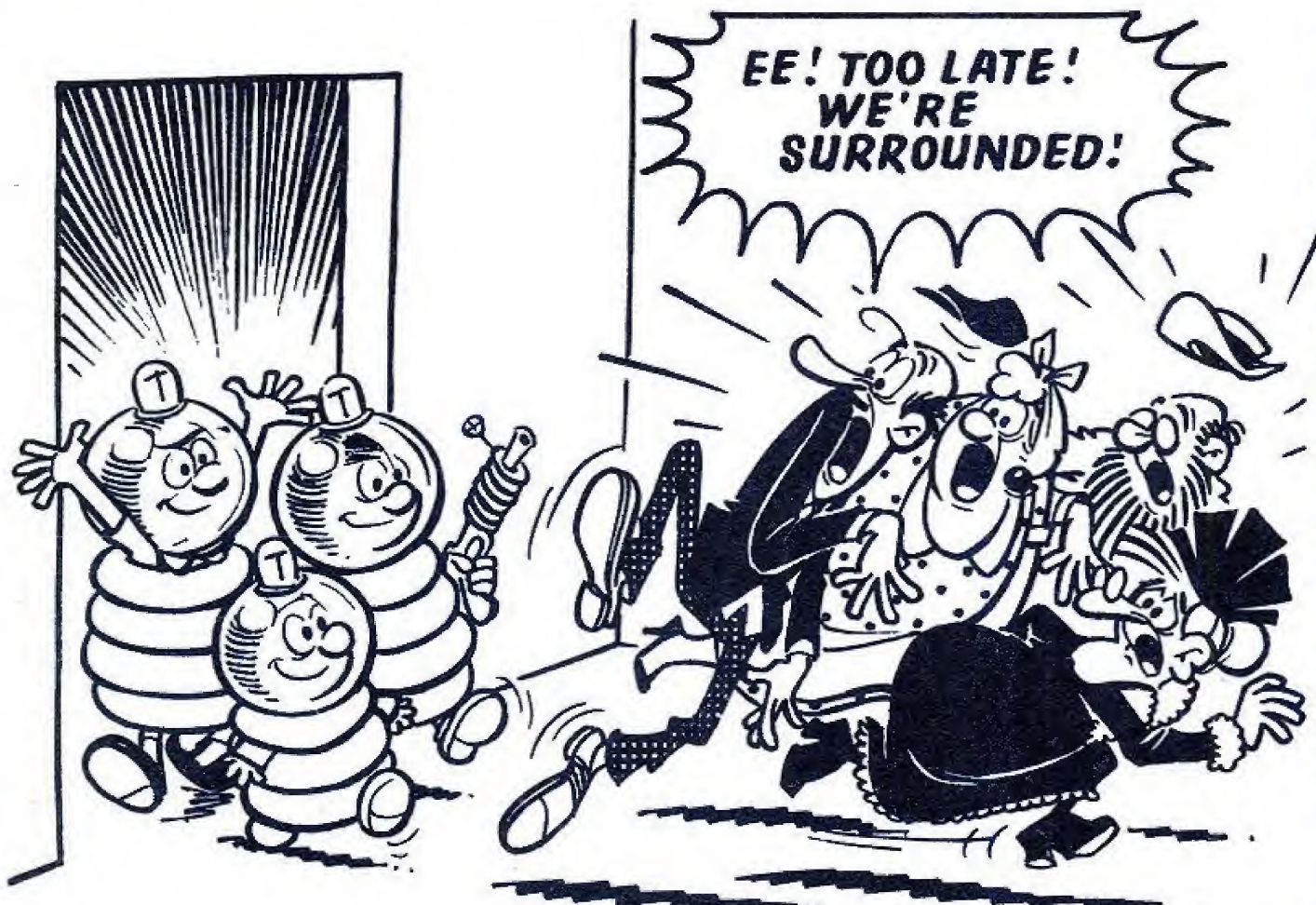
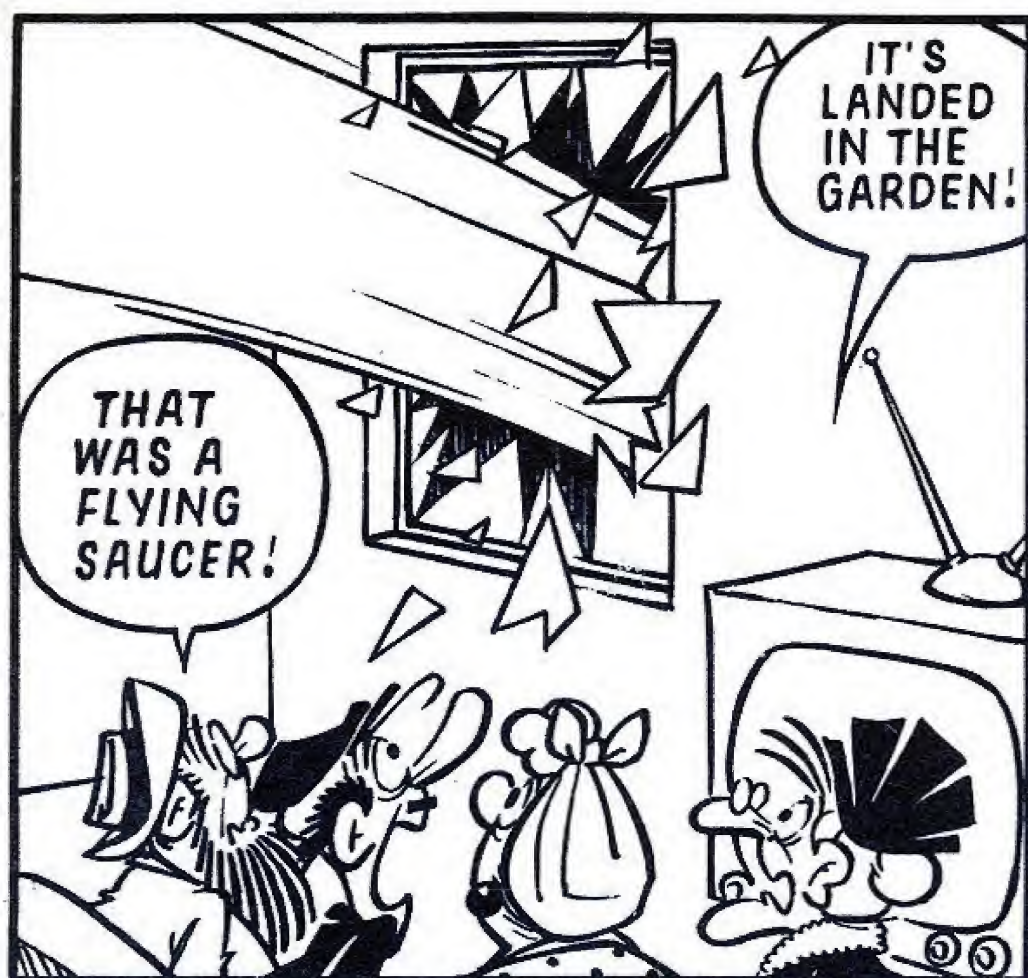
BUT THE LITTLE BATMAN STILL HAD ONE WORRY ...

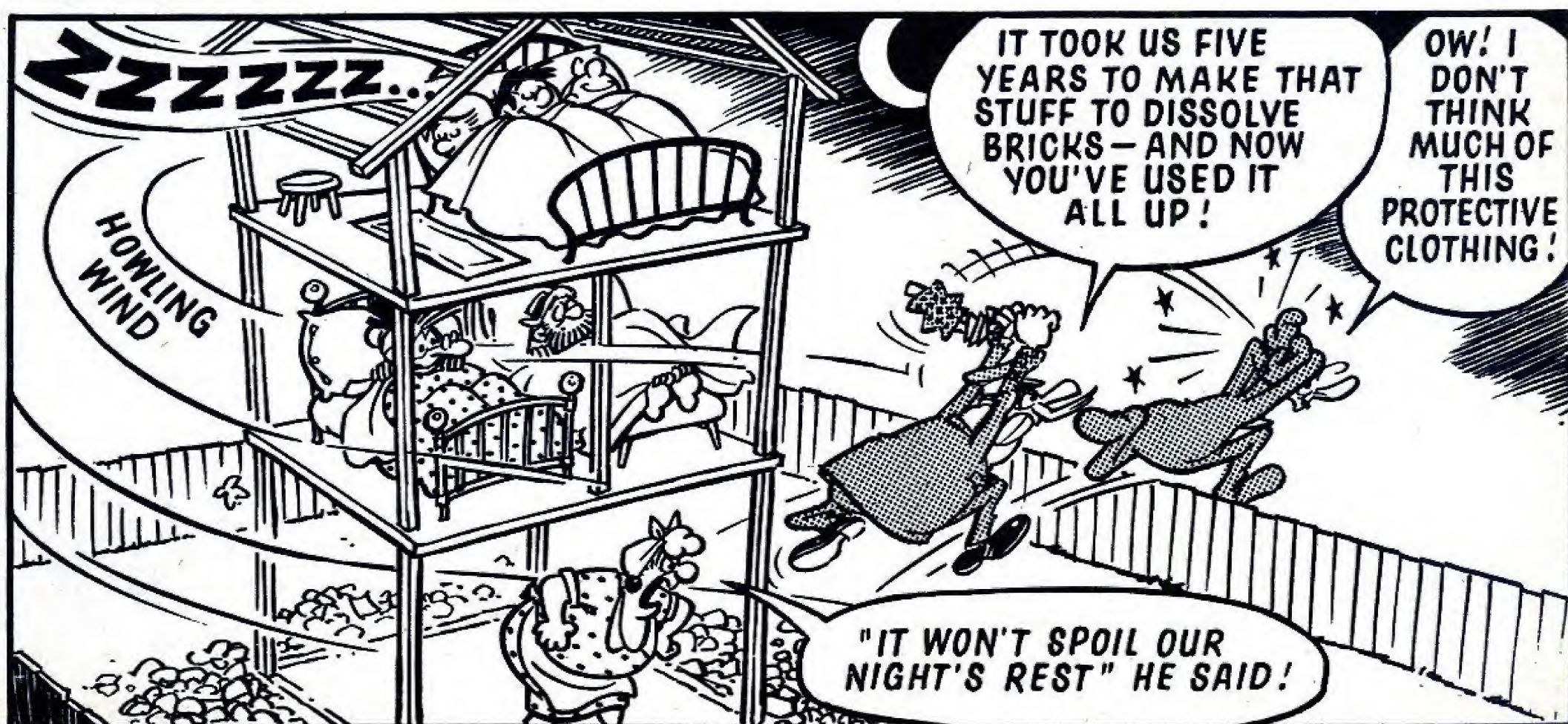
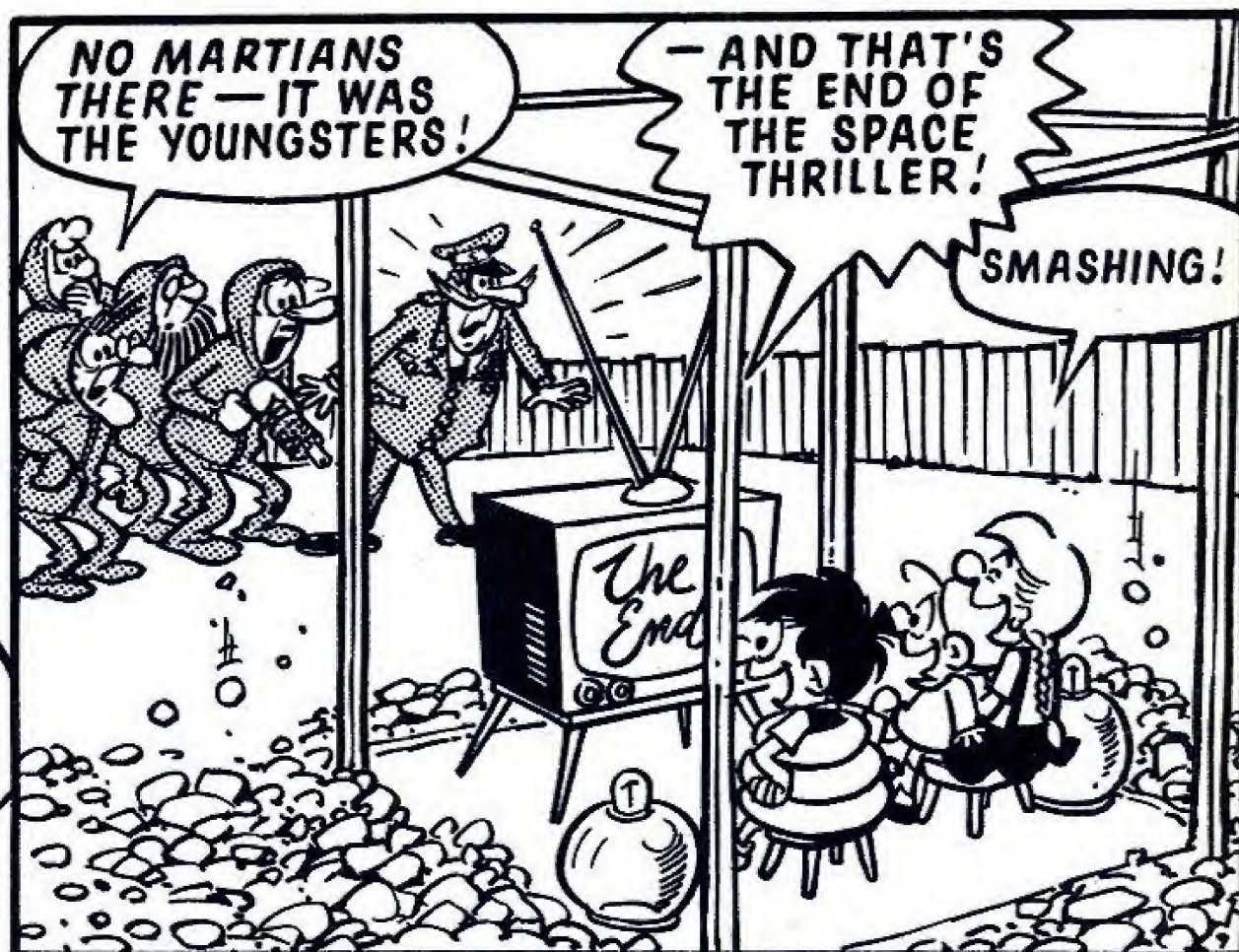
ER ... I 'OPE YOU AIN'T STILL ANNOYED WITH ME, CAP'N?

FORGET IT, SHRIMP! THE OBJECTIVE WAS ACHIEVED— A BIT EARLIER THAN EXPECTED!

THE NOTTS







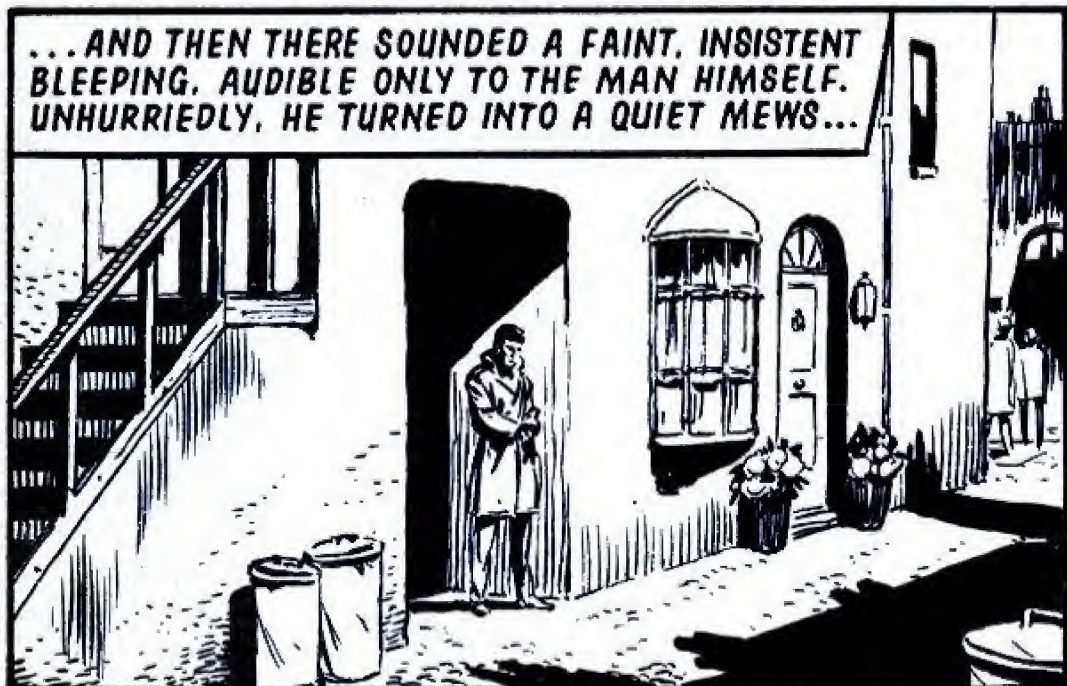
THE STEEL CLAW

FOLLOWING A RAY MACHINE ACCIDENT, LOUIS CRANDELL FOUND THAT AN ELECTRIC SHOCK MADE HIM INVISIBLE EXCEPT FOR HIS ARTIFICIAL STEEL HAND. HE BECAME A SECRET AGENT AND ACQUIRED THE ABILITY TO ELECTRIFY ANY CONDUCTIVE MATERIAL HE TOUCHED.

A MAN WALKED ALONE AND UN-NOTICED DOWN A BUSY STREET, AS INCONSPICUOUS AS ANY OF THE MORNING SHOPPERS...



...AND THEN THERE SOUNDED A FAINT, INSISTENT BLEEPING, AUDIBLE ONLY TO THE MAN HIMSELF. UNHURRIEDLY, HE TURNED INTO A QUIET MEWS...



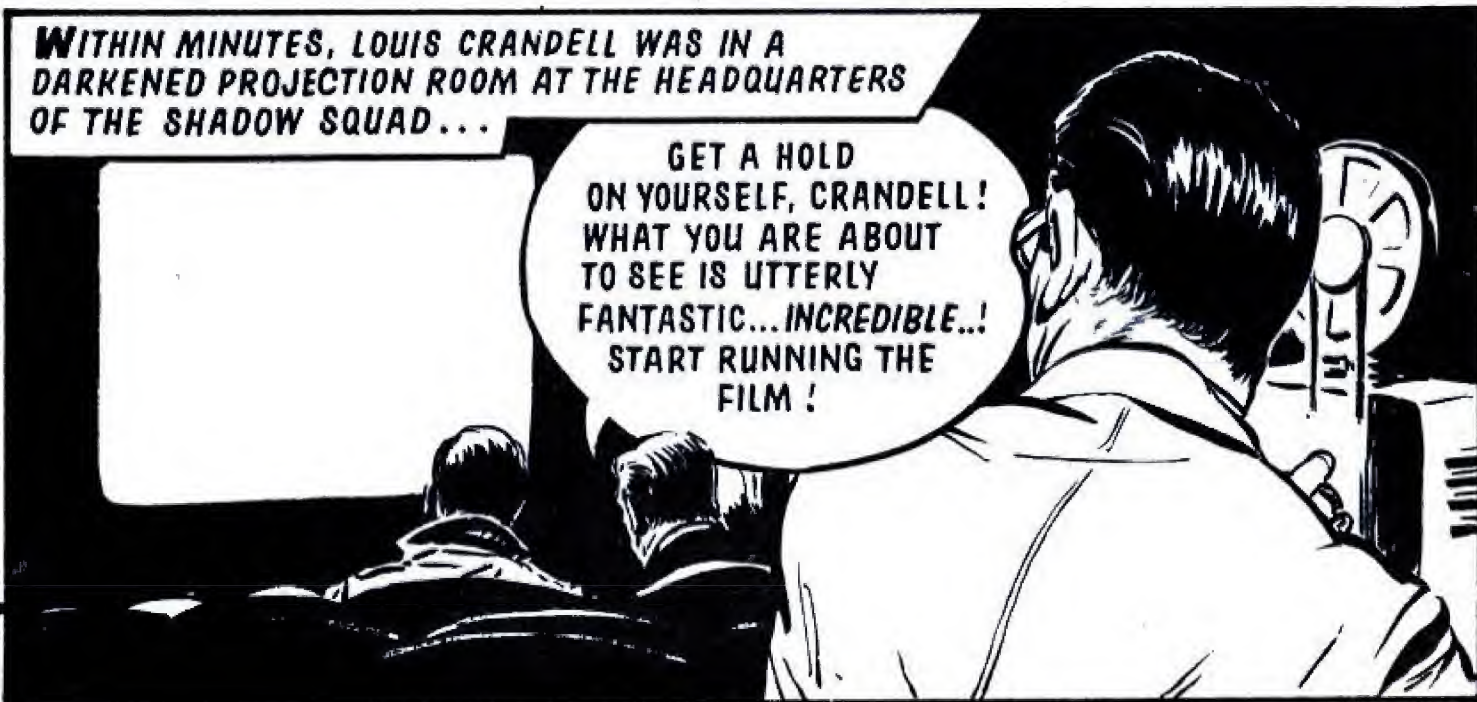
IT WAS LOUIS CRANDELL—SECRET AGENT—AND THE BLEEPING CAME FROM A MICRO-TRANSMITTER BUILT INTO HIS INCREDIBLE ARTIFICIAL RIGHT HAND...



THE WHISPERED VOICE FROM THE STEEL CLAW WAS BRIEF—AND URGENT!

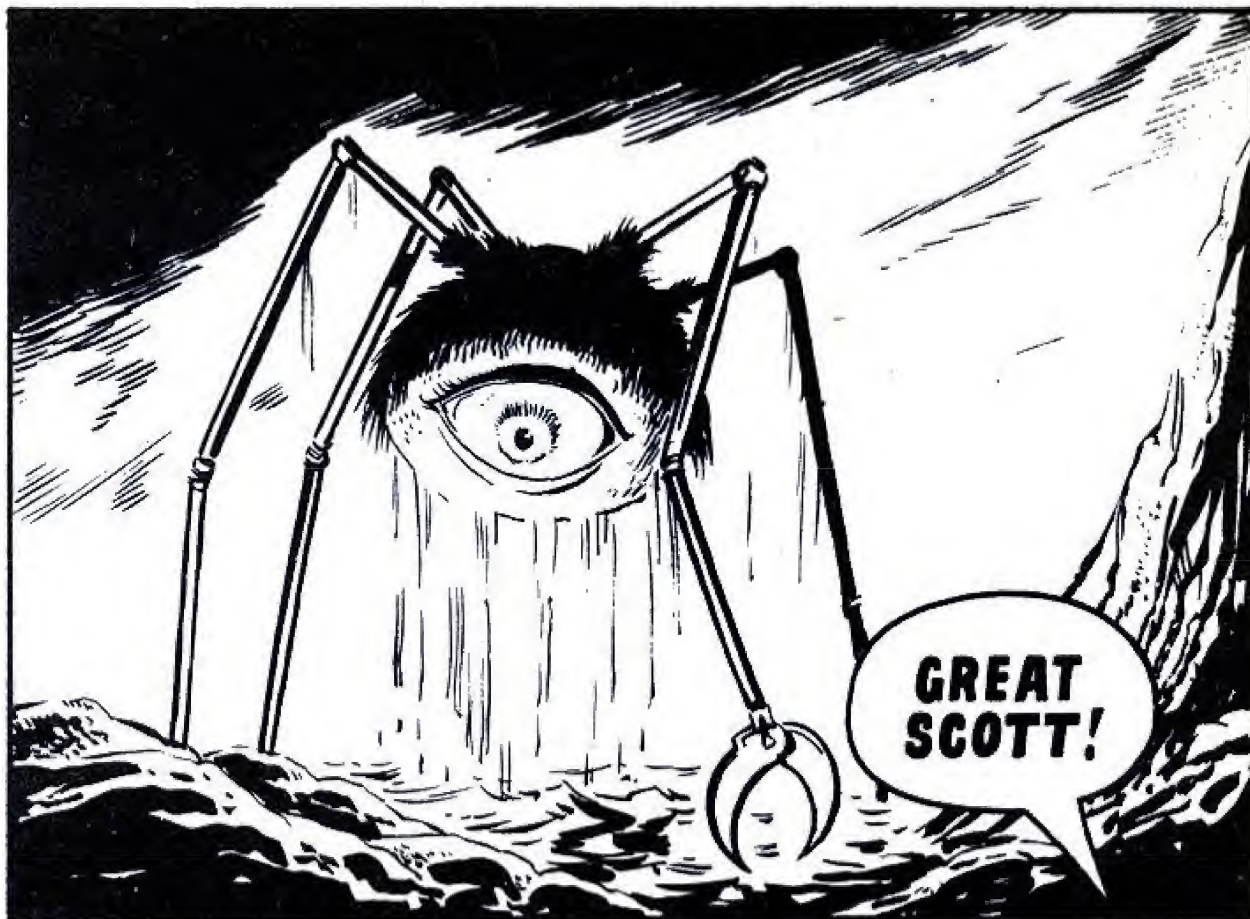


WITHIN MINUTES, LOUIS CRANDELL WAS IN A DARKENED PROJECTION ROOM AT THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE SHADOW SQUAD...



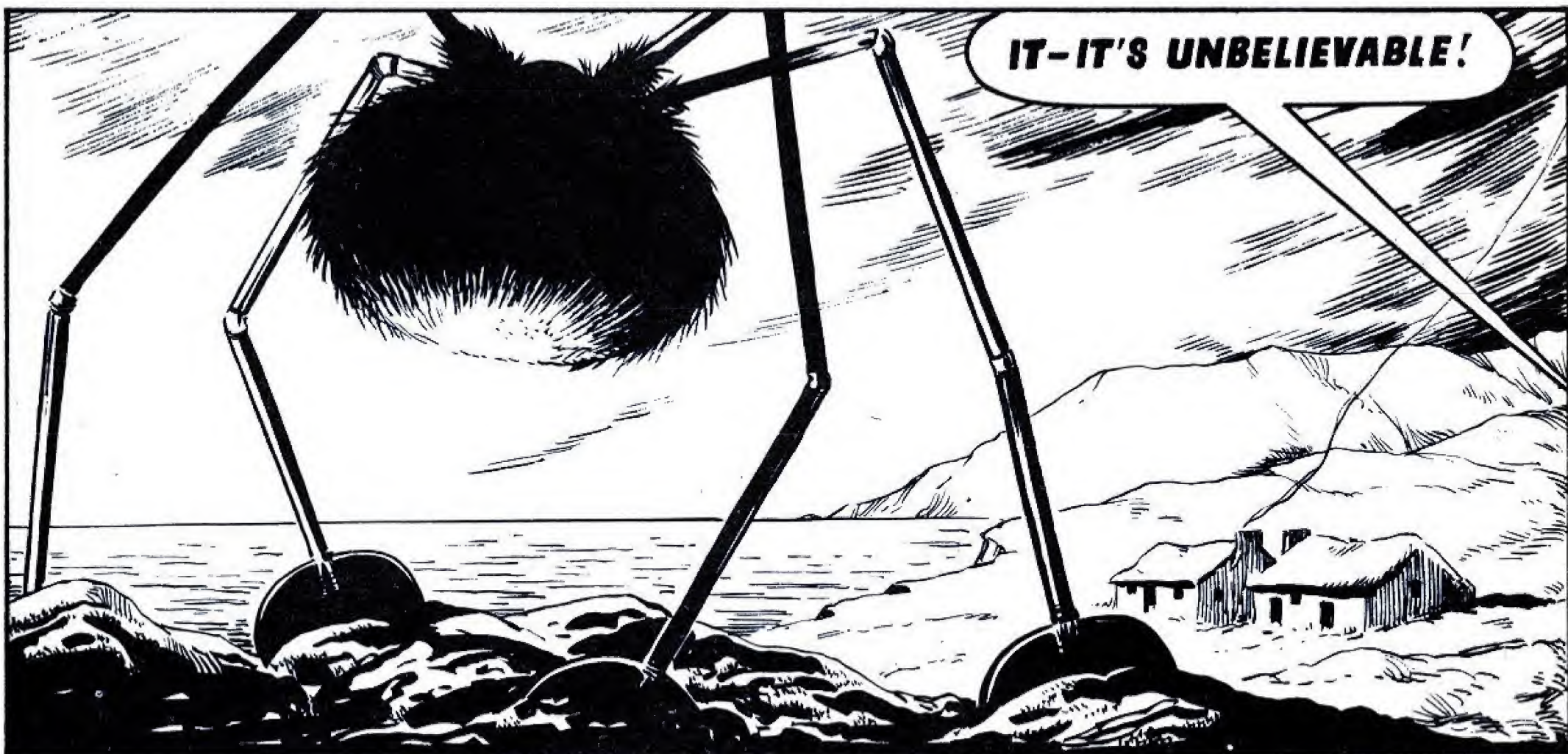
THE SCREEN FLICKERED INTO LIFE...

NOW WATCH
CLOSELY... THAT
SMOOTH OBJECT
IN THE CENTRE
WHICH COULD BE
JUST ANOTHER
ROCK!

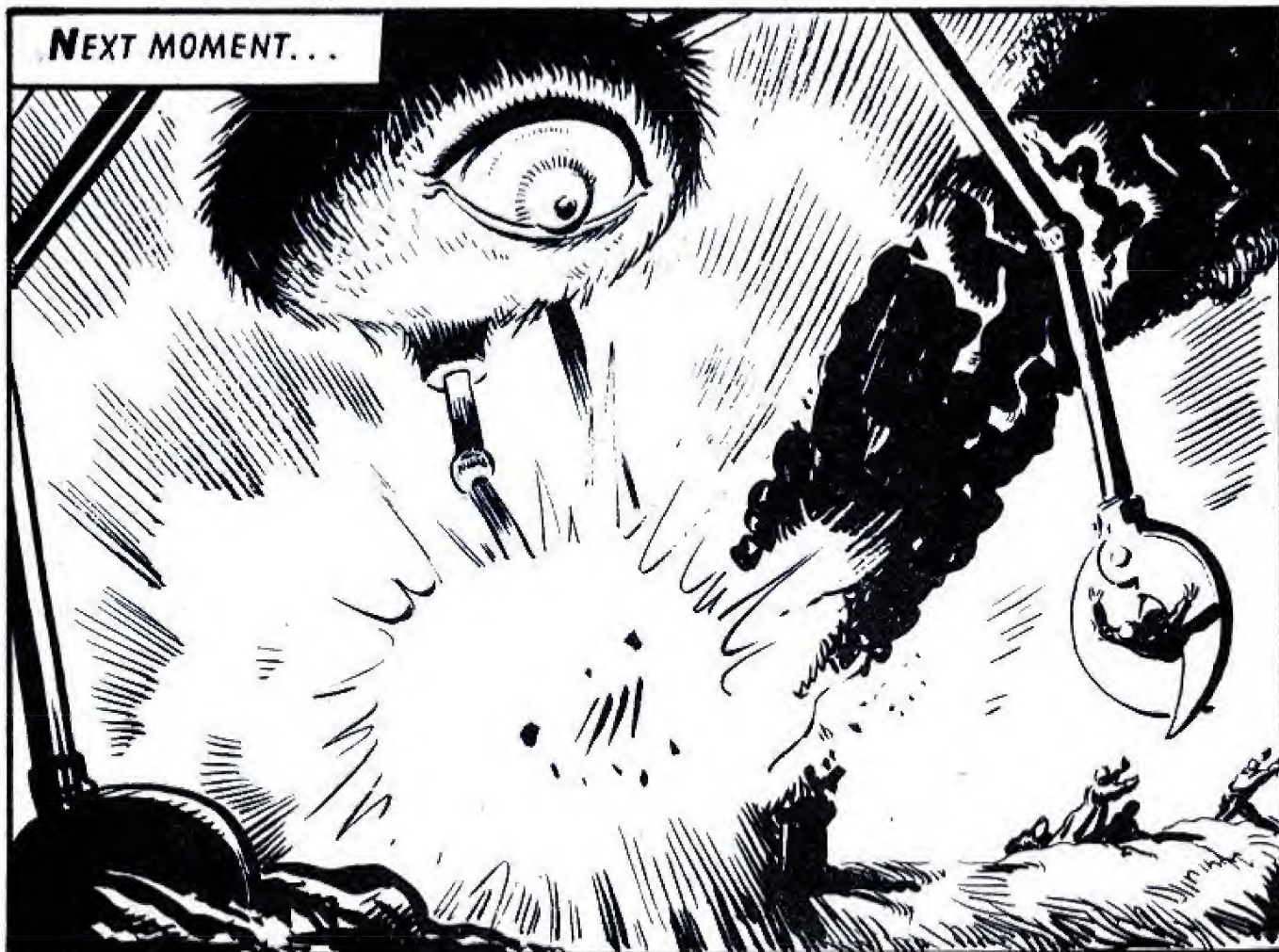


**GREAT
SCOTT!**

IT-IT'S UNBELIEVABLE!



NEXT MOMENT...



**THE WHIRR OF THE PROJECTOR
DIED AWAY...**

OUR LONG RANGE
PHOTO-PROBES PICKED THAT
UP AFTER A REPORT OF AN
UNIDENTIFIED OBJECT CRASHING
INTO THE SEA OFF THE
ORKNEYS, CRANDELL!

BUT... BUT
WHAT WAS IT?
WHAT DOES IT
MEAN?



THE PREVIOUS DAY,
OBSERVATORIES REPORTED
THE ENTRY OF A LARGE BODY
INTO THE EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE.
THIS LOOKS LIKE IT! YOUR
TASK... GO TO THE ORKNEYS
AND SEE WHAT
CAN BE DONE!



WITHIN HOURS, LOUIS CRANDELL HAD
ARRIVED BY AIR AT THE SECRET MILITARY
BASE WHICH HAD BEEN HASTILY SET UP
ON THE ISLAND OF BALNACARRA...

THE THING, WHATEVER IT IS, IS ON THAT
ISLAND, CRANDELL! IT HASN'T MOVED...
YET! BUT EVERYTHING MY ARTILLERY
THROWS AT IT BOUNCES OFF LIKE PEAS!

I UNDERSTAND
A CONSIGNMENT OF
THE LATEST NUCLEAR
SHELLS ARRIVED JUST
BEFORE I DID?



THE GENERAL NODDED, AND THEY WALKED TO
THE LOADING GUN...

READY AND
STANDING BY,
SIR!

VERY GOOD!
WAIT UNTIL THE
TARGET SHOWS
ITSELF, AND
THEN FIRE AT
WILL!



SUDDENLY...

THERE
IT IS!

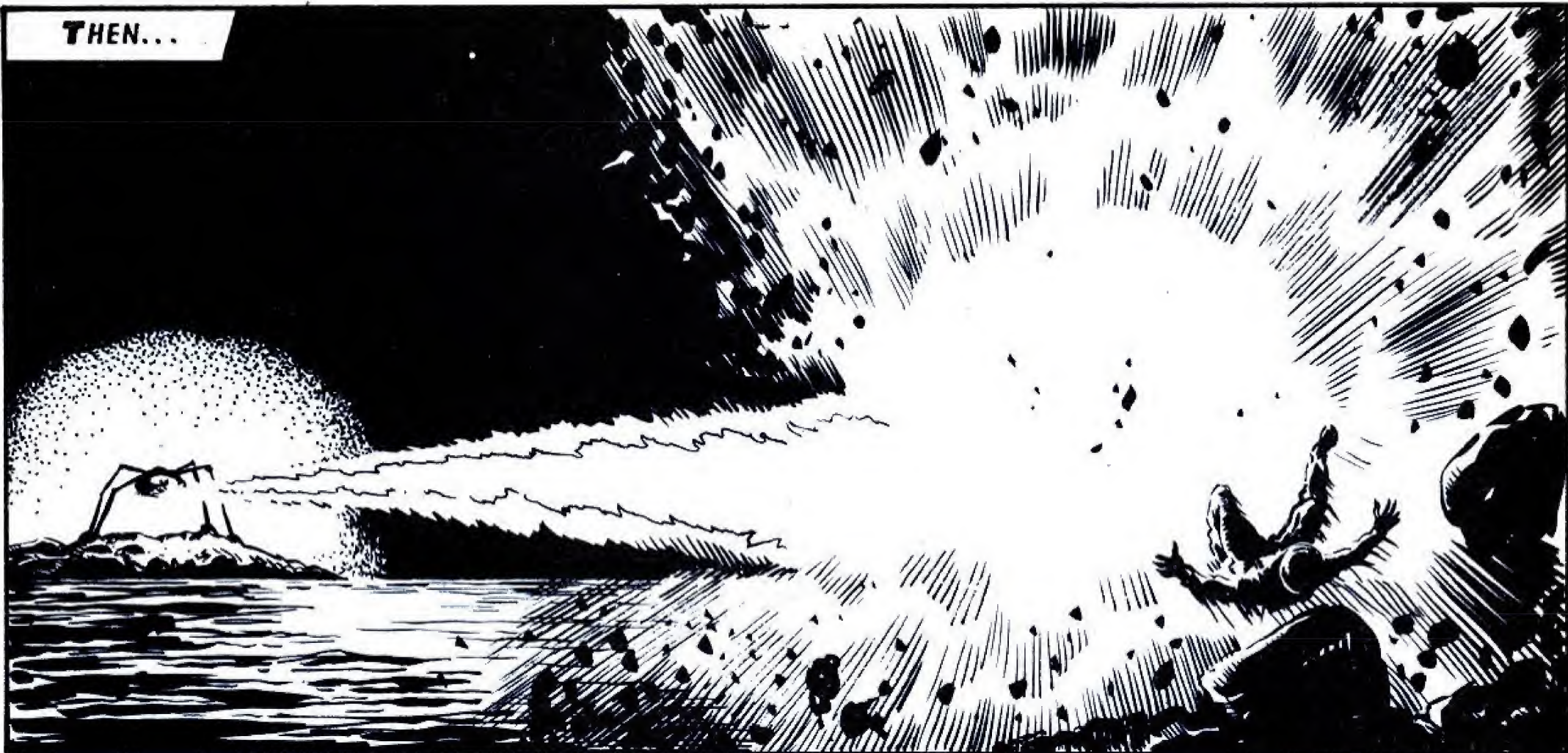
CORRECT
BEARING TO
NINETY-FORTY!
OPEN SIGHTS!
FIRE ONE!



GOOD GRIEF!
IT DIDN'T
EVEN
STAGGER!



THEN...



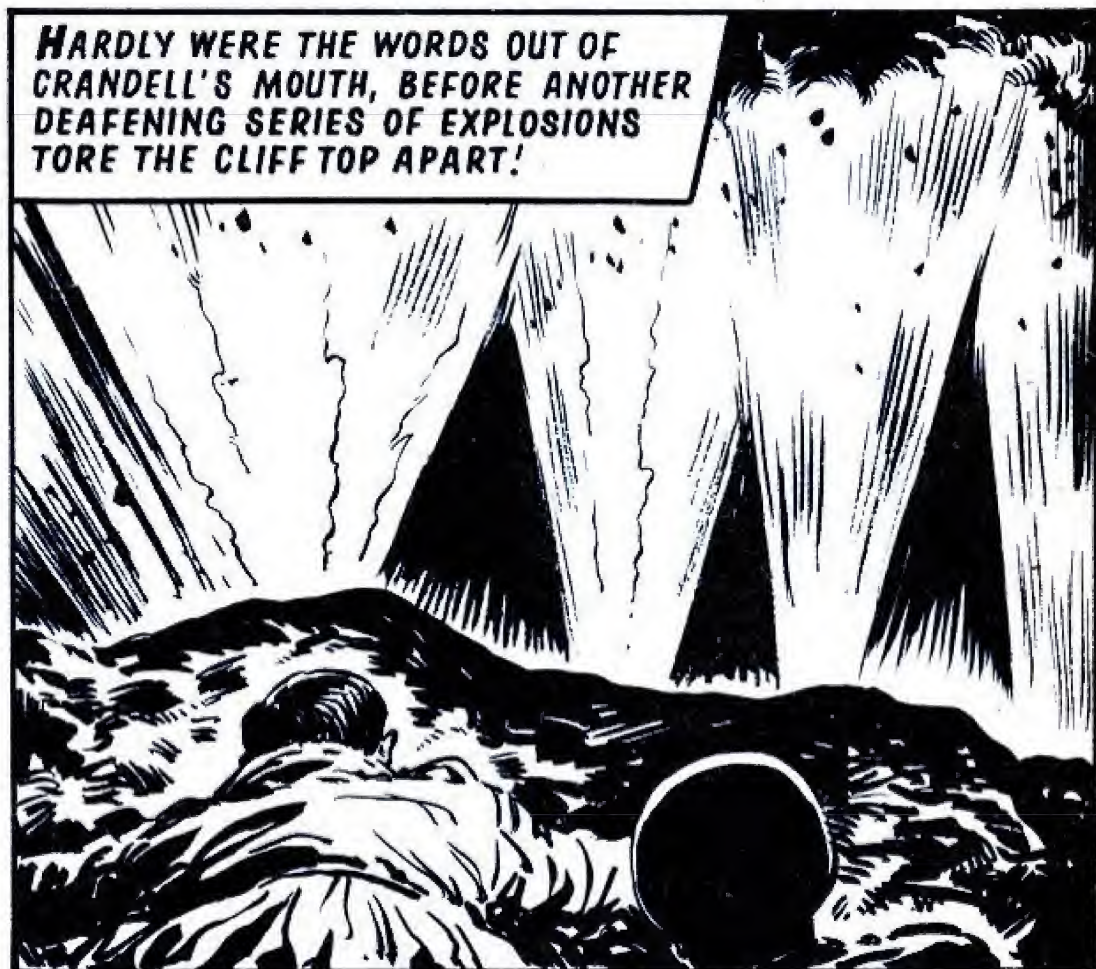
MIRACULOUSLY, CRANDELL AND THE GENERAL WERE JUST FAR ENOUGH AWAY FROM THE GUN TO ESCAPE...

IT'S
DECIDED
TO
RETALIATE!

... AND IT LOOKS
AS THOUGH THERE'S
NOTHING WE'VE GOT
THAT CAN STOP IT!



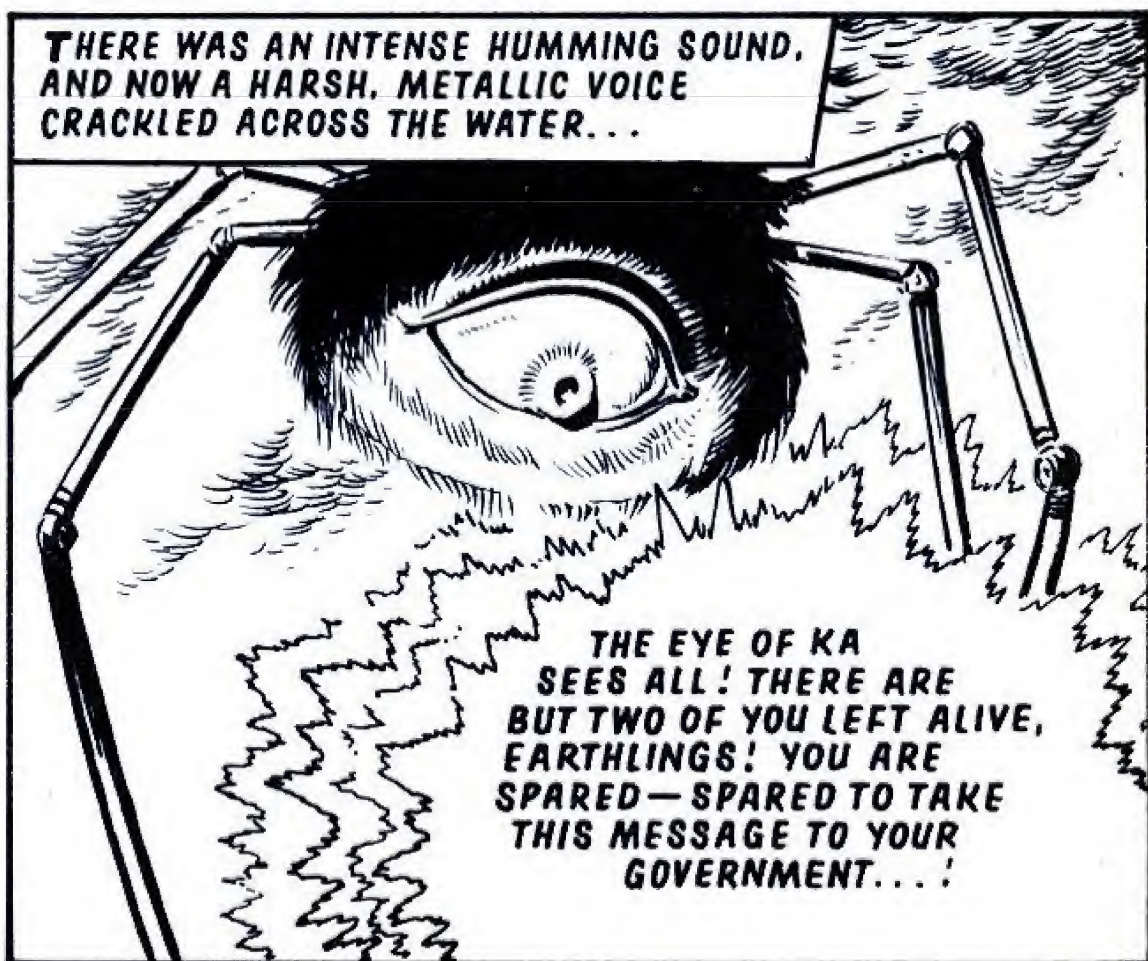
HARDLY WERE THE WORDS OUT OF CRANDELL'S MOUTH, BEFORE ANOTHER DEAFENING SERIES OF EXPLOSIONS TORE THE CLIFF TOP APART!



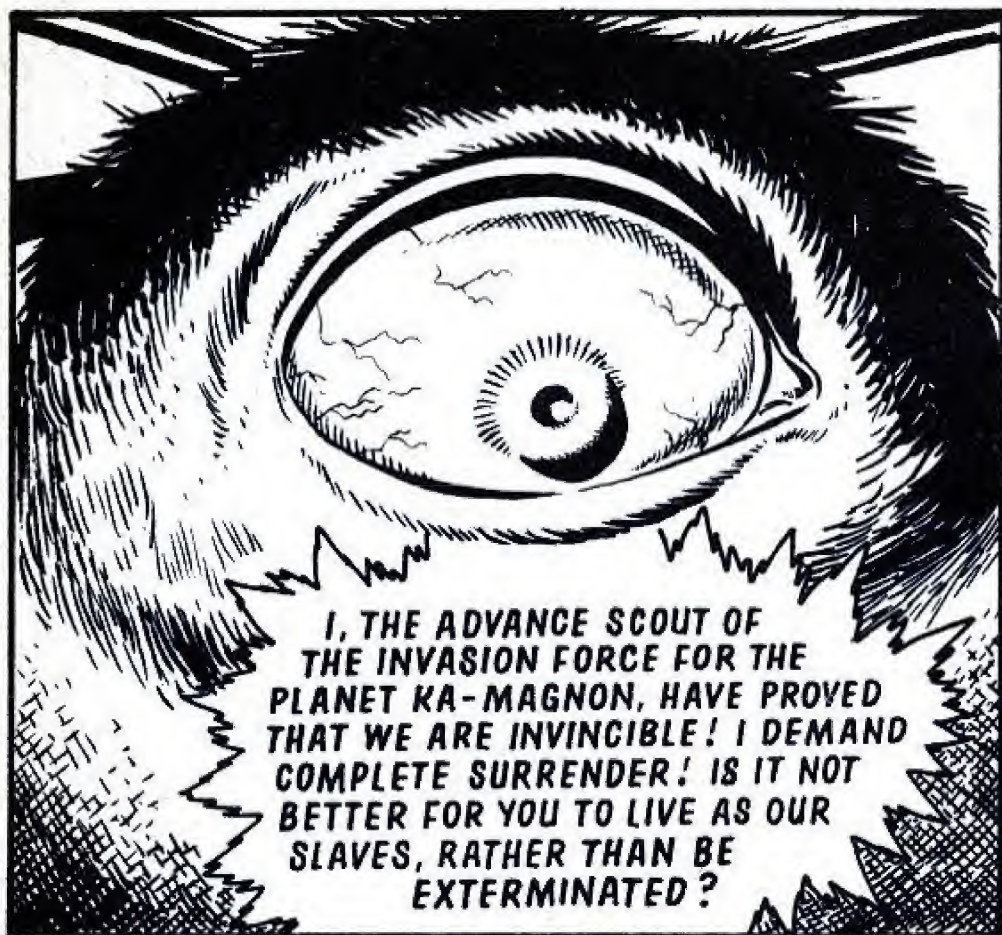
WELL, GENERAL, WHATEVER
ULTIMATE PERIL HAS TO BE
FACED—WE'RE ON OUR
OWN!



THERE WAS AN INTENSE HUMMING SOUND, AND NOW A HARSH, METALLIC VOICE CRACKLED ACROSS THE WATER...



THE EYE OF KA
SEES ALL! THERE ARE
BUT TWO OF YOU LEFT ALIVE,
EARTHLINGS! YOU ARE
SPARED—SPARED TO TAKE
THIS MESSAGE TO YOUR
GOVERNMENT...!



I, THE ADVANCE SCOUT OF THE INVASION FORCE FOR THE PLANET KA-MAGNON, HAVE PROVED THAT WE ARE INVINCIBLE! I DEMAND COMPLETE SURRENDER! IS IT NOT BETTER FOR YOU TO LIVE AS OUR SLAVES, RATHER THAN BE EXTERMINATED?



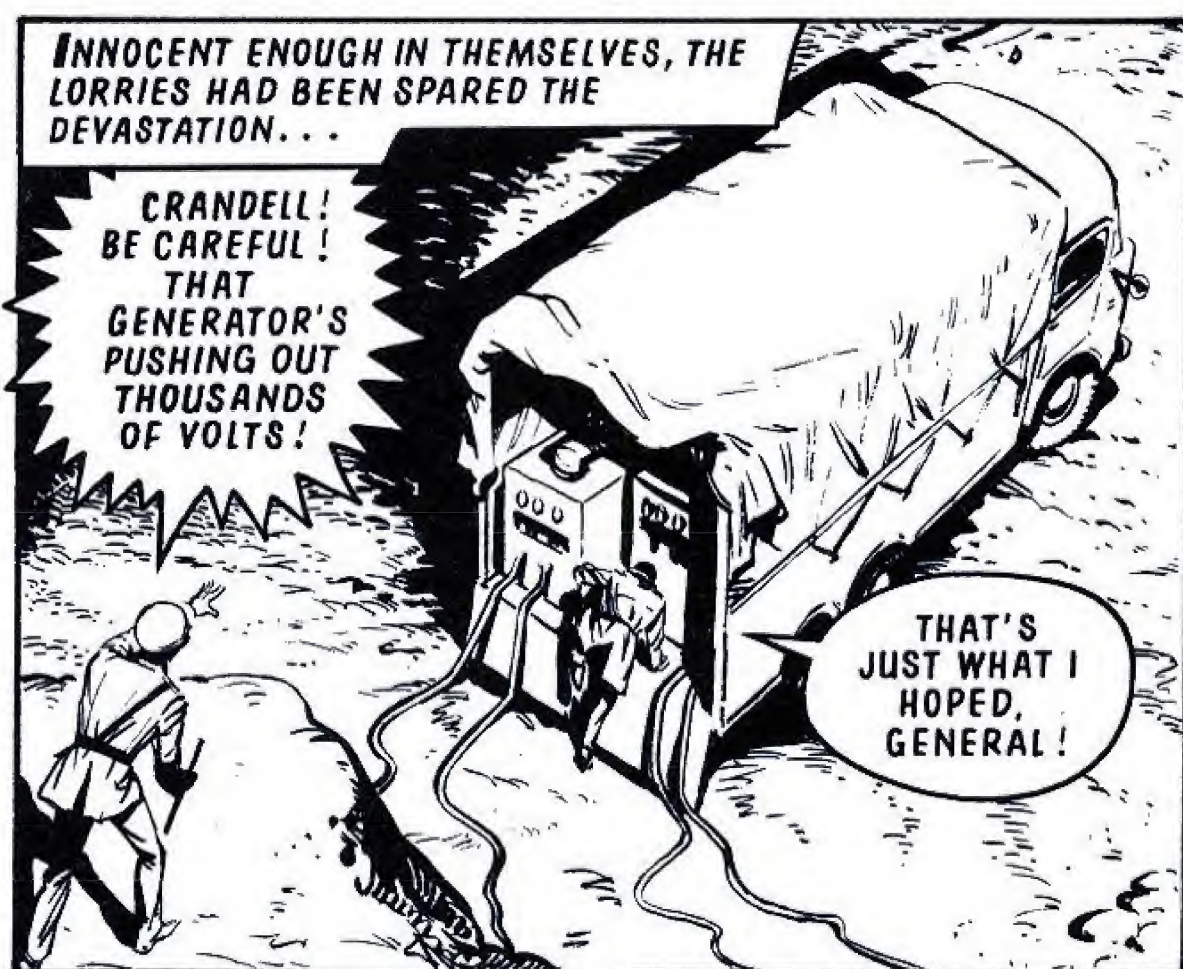
THE EYE... IT MUST BE ABLE TO SEE WITH FANTASTIC POWER! WHAT ARE WE TO DO? WE'RE BEATEN!

NOT YET, GENERAL! THE GENERATOR LORRIES FOR THE ARTILLERY BATTERY... WHERE WERE THEY PARKED?



BACK THERE... BEHIND THE DUNES! BUT HOW CAN THEY...?

THEY MAY GIVE US A CHANCE! COME ON!



INNOCENT ENOUGH IN THEMSELVES, THE LORRIES HAD BEEN SPARED THE DEVASTATION...

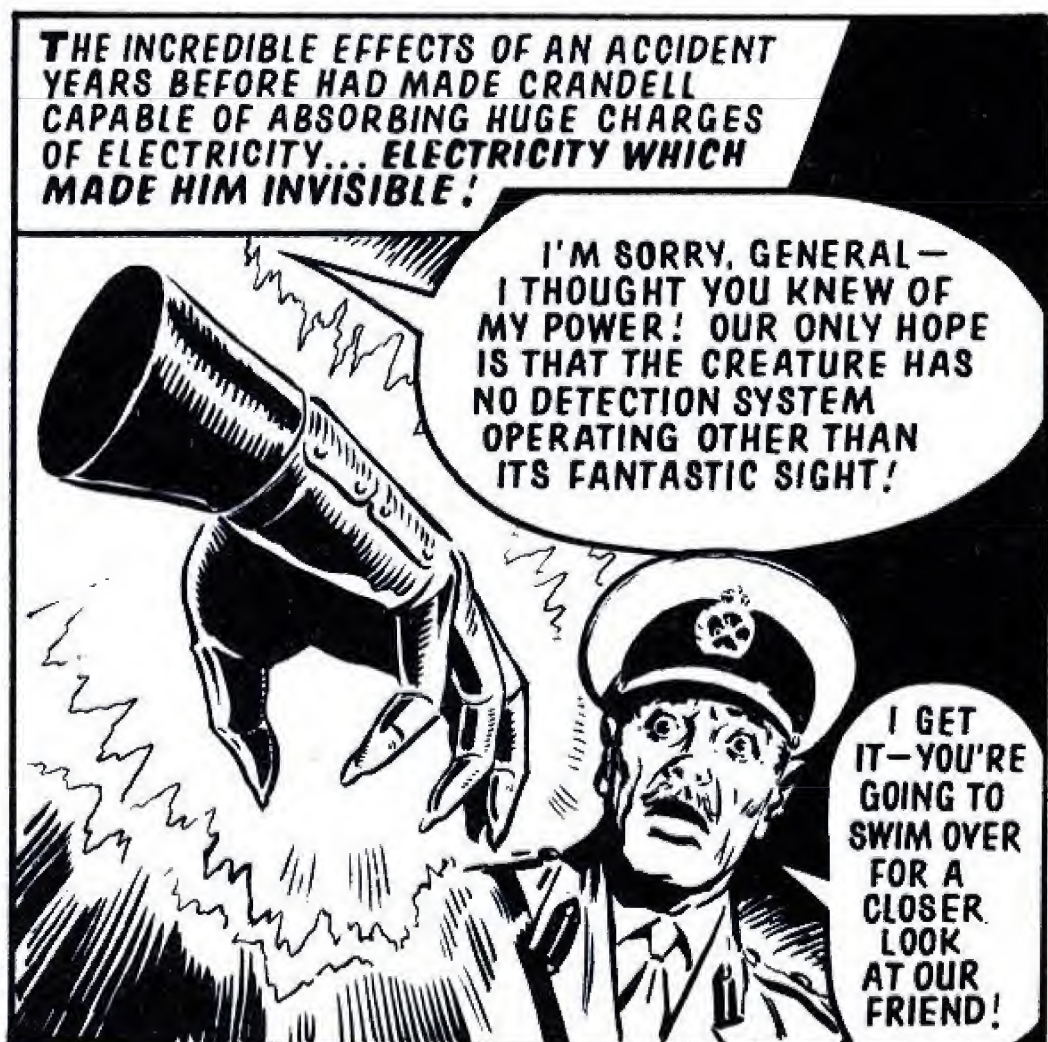
CRANDELL! BE CAREFUL! THAT GENERATOR'S PUSHING OUT THOUSANDS OF VOLTS!

THAT'S JUST WHAT I HOPED, GENERAL!



WITHOUT HESITATION, LOUIS CRANDELL STRETCHED OUT HIS METAL HAND AND GRASPED THE MAIN TERMINALS...

UUUGH! THE POWER... IT'S IMMENSE!



THE INCREDIBLE EFFECTS OF AN ACCIDENT YEARS BEFORE HAD MADE CRANDELL CAPABLE OF ABSORBING HUGE CHARGES OF ELECTRICITY... ELECTRICITY WHICH MADE HIM INVISIBLE!

I'M SORRY, GENERAL - I THOUGHT YOU KNEW OF MY POWER! OUR ONLY HOPE IS THAT THE CREATURE HAS NO DETECTION SYSTEM OPERATING OTHER THAN ITS FANTASTIC SIGHT!

I GET IT - YOU'RE GOING TO SWIM OVER FOR A CLOSER LOOK AT OUR FRIEND!

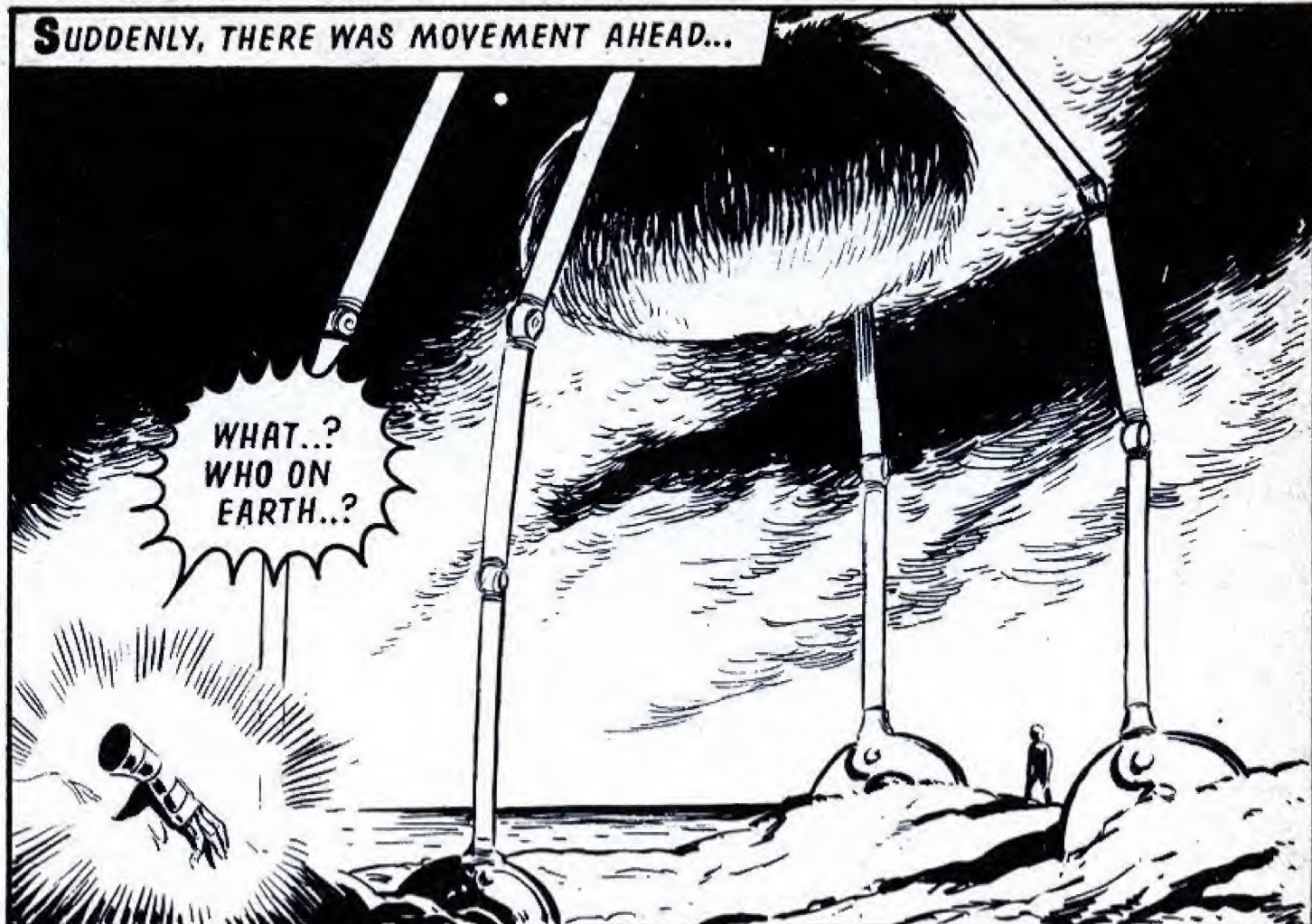
SILENTLY, CRANDELL CREPT DOWN TO THE SHORE AND SWAM ACROSS THE STRAITS IN LONG, UNDERWATER BURSTS...

IT HASN'T DETECTED MY PRESENCE! SO FAR, SO GOOD...

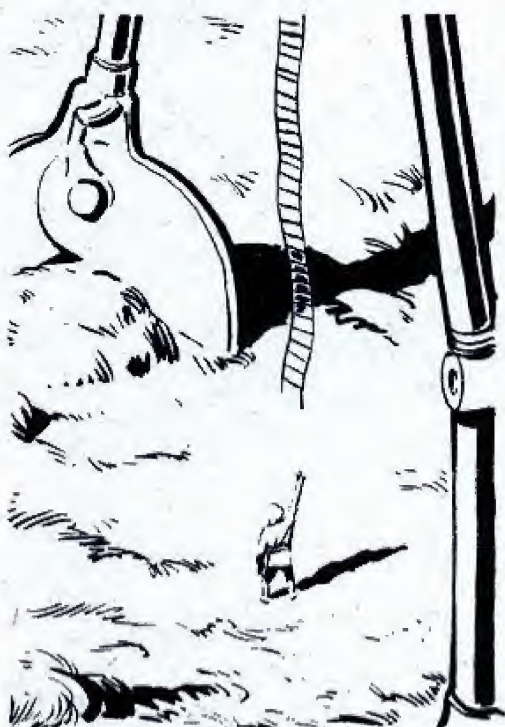


SUDDENLY, THERE WAS MOVEMENT AHEAD...

WHAT...? WHO ON EARTH...?



ONCE BENEATH THE HUGE MONSTROSITY FROM OUTER SPACE, THE CREATURE GAVE OUT A SHRILL, HIGH-PITCHED CRY. NEXT INSTANT A FLEXIBLE LADDER WAS LOWERED...



IF I'M GOING TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS, THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY! HERE GOES!



DEFTLY, CRANDELL CAUGHT THE LADDER AND CLUNG ON AS IT WAS REELED IN...



SO THE WHOLE THING'S A FANTASTIC SPACE-SHIP... AND THERE ARE ONLY SIX OF THESE CREATURES TO DEAL WITH!

STEALTHILY, CRANDELL SLIPPED INTO THE COVER OF A BANK OF INSTRUMENTS...

LET'S SEE HOW THEY STAND UP TO NERVE GAS!



SECONDS TICKED BY... AND NOTHING HAPPENED! THE CREATURES WERE UTTERLY IMMUNE TO THE GAS...

IT IS TIME TO REPORT TO KA-MAGNON THAT THE EARTHLINGS ARE SUITABLE FOR ENSLAVEMENT! CALL THE GREAT KA ON THE VIDEO-LINK!

YES, COMMANDER!



BUT THEN, WITHOUT WARNING...

AIEEE! LOOK!

BY JUPITER! THEY'VE SPOTTED MY STEEL CLAW!

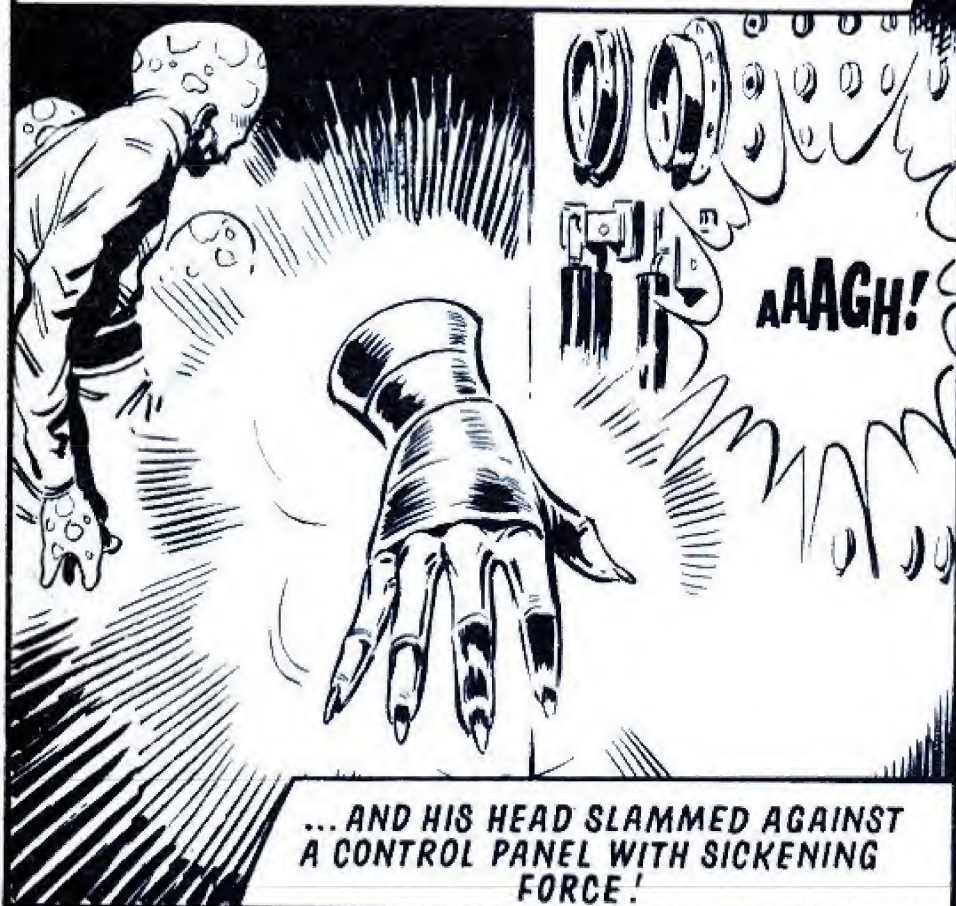


IN A MASS, THE CREATURES CAME FOR HIM! THE FIRST FINGER OF THE CLAW STABBED OUT, PUMPING ARMOUR-PIERCING BULLETS...



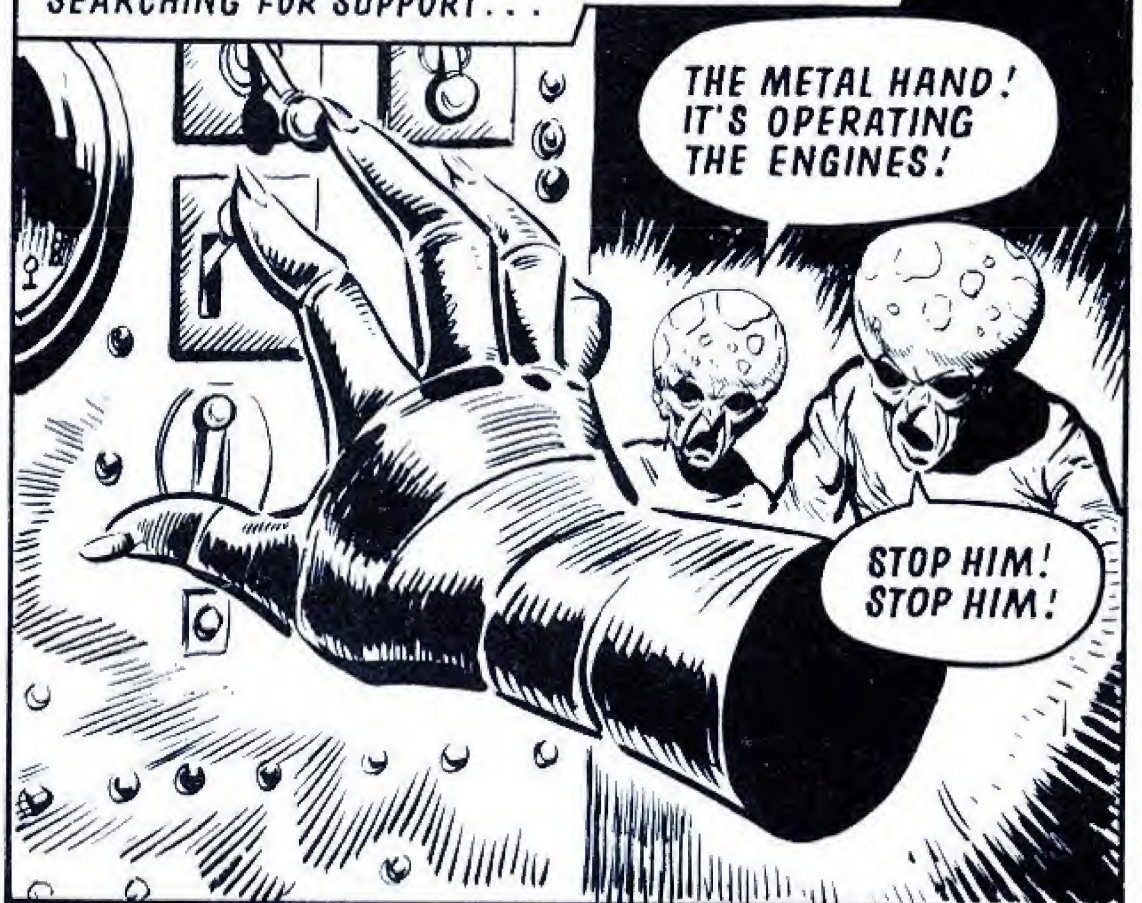
GOOD GRIEF! THEY'RE USELESS! THE BULLETS DON'T EVEN MAKE THEM FLINCH!

DESPERATELY, CRANDELL FLUNG HIMSELF SIDWAYS — BUT HIS FOOT SLIPPED ON THE FLOOR...



...AND HIS HEAD SLAMMED AGAINST A CONTROL PANEL WITH SICKENING FORCE!

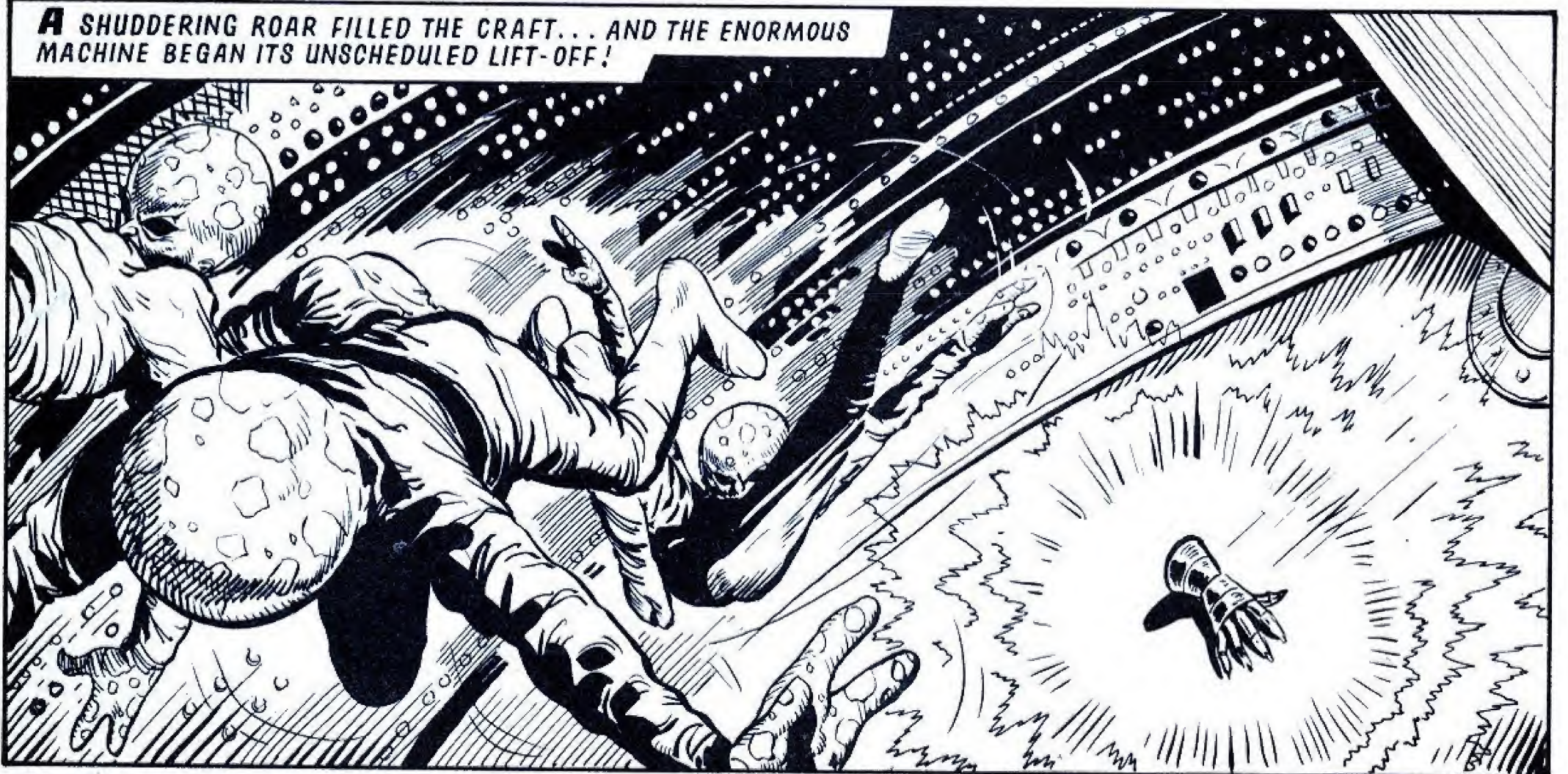
AS CRANDELL'S SENSES SWAM, HIS CLAW SLID DOWN THE BANK OF SWITCHES AND LEVERS, SEARCHING FOR SUPPORT...



THE METAL HAND! IT'S OPERATING THE ENGINES!

STOP HIM! STOP HIM!

A SHUDDERING ROAR FILLED THE CRAFT... AND THE ENORMOUS MACHINE BEGAN ITS UNSCHEDULED LIFT-OFF!



IN THE WHIRLING CONTROL CENTRE, CRANDELL WAS FLUNG AROUND AMONGST THE CREATURES... AND AS HIS STEEL CLAW CAME INTO CONTACT WITH THEM SAVAGE CHARGES OF ELECTRICITY WERE RELEASED!



THE STRUGGLING LIMBS WERE STILLED— BUT THE CRAFT, UTTERLY OUT OF CONTROL, PLUNGED DOWNWARDS IN A GREAT ARC...



A SOLITARY FIGURE WAS FLUNG CLEAR AS THE MANGLED WRECKAGE ERUPTED IN LIVID FLAME!



NEXT MOMENT...



AND THOUSANDS OF MILES ABOVE THE EARTH, IN THE FLAGSHIP OF THE WAITING KA-MAGNON INVASION FLEET...

LEADER TO AREA COMMANDERS! OPERATION EARTH-PROBE HAS FAILED! RETURN TO KA-MAGNON!

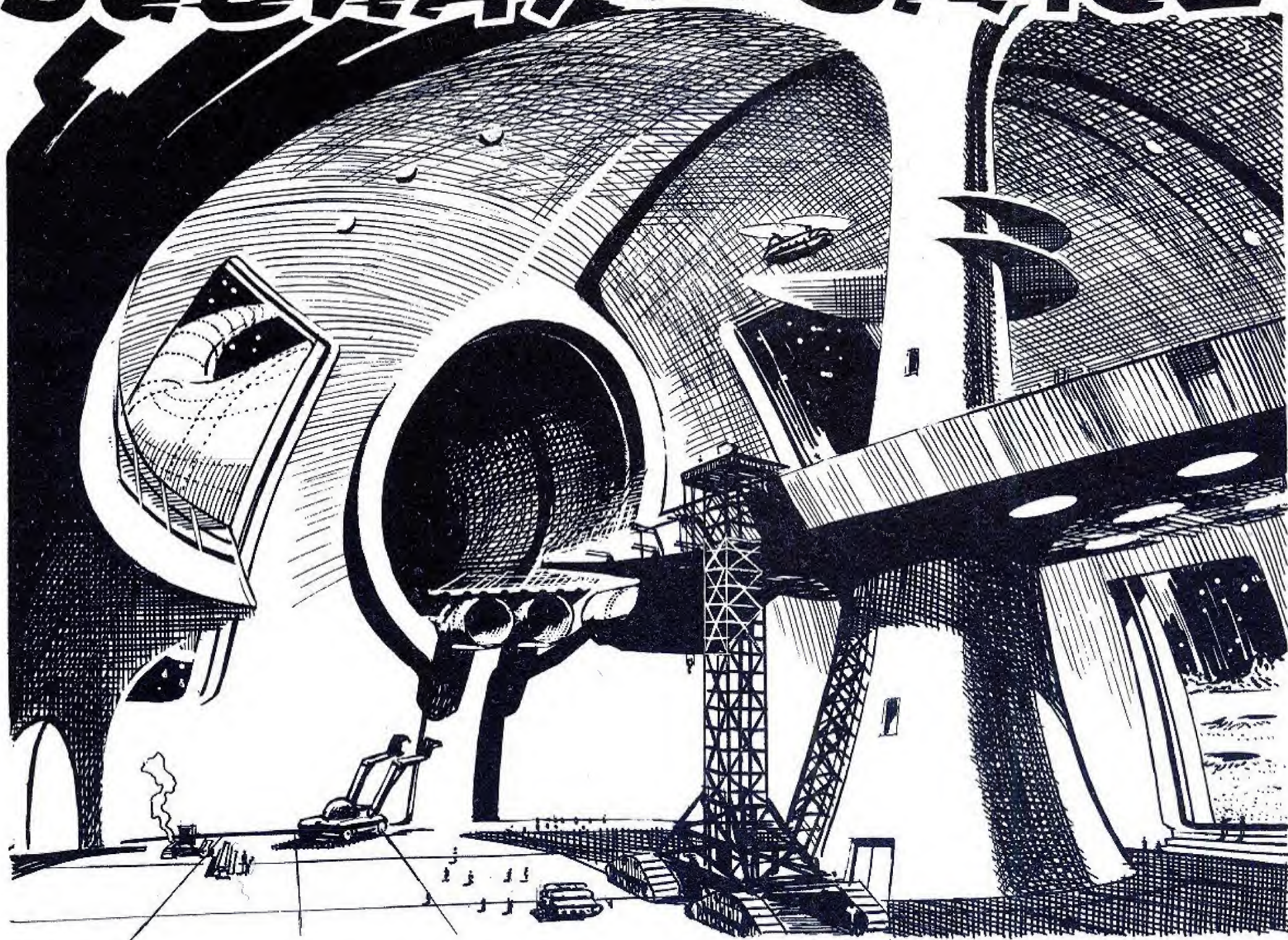


WHILE BELOW, WAITING FOR A RED CROSS HELICOPTER FROM THE MAINLAND, LOUIS CRANDELL KNEW THAT THE INCREDIBLE POWER OF HIS STEEL CLAW HAD SAVED THE WORLD!



THE END

SUBWAY in SPACE



TUNNEL FROM THE MOON

INSIDE the huge dome, tremendous activity was going on, and the air rang to the sound of riveting guns and welding torches.

About three-quarters of the way up in the roof of the dome was a great circular hole, and from it a huge tunnel dwindled away into the distance.

Various buildings and platforms were being constructed inside the dome, for it was going to be a reception and departure centre for the tunnel which was the most fantastic construction ever erected in the entire history of engineering!

Looking through the windows of the dome, Steve Bax could see the airless surface of the Moon, with its shallow craters, white dust and impression of absolute silence.

He could also see the tunnel running parallel to the ground for several hundred yards and then rising in a vast sweep to stretch away into space like an endless tube.

The year was A.D. 2018, and the Astral Engineering Company, owned by Steve's father Ronald Bax, was just completing a project that would become one of the wonders of the universe . . . *a tunnel between the Earth and the Moon!*

Newspaper and television reporters fussed around

as Steve accompanied his father on a tour of inspection of the nearly-finished dome.

"But Mr. Bax," one of them said, "the Moon is constantly circling round the Earth—and the Earth itself revolves on its axis! How do you manage to connect them by a tunnel?"

"Quite simple," answered Ronald Bax, a white-haired, elderly but tough-looking man. "Although the Moon circles the Earth it always keeps the same face to the Earth. So on the Moon, we can fix the tunnel to the surface, as you can see. At the Earth's end, the tunnel finishes in the upper atmosphere, trailing there, so to speak, and it is served by air ferries from the ground. Since the tunnel is heavier on the Earth side, it hangs there by its own weight."

"Gee!" a reporter gasped admiringly. "A tunnel nearly a quarter of a million miles long!"

"But what's it going to be used for?" asked another.

The rest of the newsmen went quiet as he spoke. This was the mystery that was puzzling all of them.

"I should have thought that was obvious," Steve's father said. "At the moment the settlements, mines and bases on the Moon are served by rocket ships. But space travel is tremendously expensive. This tunnel will make travel between the Earth and the

Moon cheap. Ordinary aeroplanes will be able to fly down it and it will also have a tube train service ! ”

“ *A subway in space !* ” exclaimed another reporter. “ *That’ll make a terrific headline ! When does the tunnel open ?* ”

“ The first passengers will journey to Earth by tube train in a few days’ time,” Ronald Bax replied. “ We hope to have the aeroplane service in operation by then, too. Aircraft will be quicker, of course, because they will be able to fly straight out of the end of the tunnel and on to their destinations.”

At last, when he had answered all their questions, the reporters dispersed.

“ They certainly were impressed, Dad ! ” Steve remarked with a grin.

His father nodded. “ I think we’ll get plenty of good publicity.”

Suddenly a buzz came from a small transistor radio he carried in his pocket. He took it out and a girl’s voice said : “ There are two visitors to see you, Mr. Bax.”

He flicked a switch. “ Thanks, Belinda, we’ll be right with you.”

Ronald Bax and Steve made their way to their office . . . then both of them raised their eyebrows in amazement when they recognised the visitors.

They were Jo and Jamie Tarreli, the two brothers who owned Spaceways Incorporated, the company which handled nearly all the traffic between the Earth and the Moon.

The brothers were strikingly alike, and might have been twins. Both were round-faced men with beetle-black eyebrows and quick, darting eyes.

They didn’t waste any time.

“ Okay, Bax,” Jo Tarreli said, “ we see your tunnel’s nearly ready. How much did it cost to build ? Ten million pounds ? We’ll write out a cheque now for fifteen million pounds and buy it from you.”

“ You’ve certainly got plenty of money to throw around,” Steve replied sharply.

Jo growled but said nothing.

“ It’s quite an offer,” Mr. Bax commented. “ But we were rather looking forward to running the tunnel ourselves. What will you do with it if we sell ? ”

“ Do ? Tear the thing down, of course ! ” snarled Jo Tarreli, his face becoming livid. “ If you operate it, we’ll lose all our business ! ”

“ That’s not true ! ” Steve retorted. “ You’d still have your spaceline to Mars ! ”

“ Sure ! ” sneered Jamie. “ Until you two build a tunnel to there as well.”

“ That’s out of the question,” Mr. Bax replied evenly. “ The distance between Earth and Mars is much too great.”

“ Anyway,” Steve put in, “ you can hardly expect us to sell the tunnel to you now that you’ve admitted what you want to do with it.”

“ Listen,” Jo said in heavy tones. “ We’ve been in this business since the first Moon station was built. Space is for spaceships—not for another version of the perishing London Underground ! ”

Steve’s father laughed. “ Sorry, gentlemen,” he said emphatically. “ No sale.”

“ *Your tunnel’s made of plastic, ain’t it ?* ” asked Jamie Tarreli his voice charged with menace. “ *Supposing one of our ships got a bit too close and melted a section with its rocket exhaust ?* ”

Ronald Bax went pale. “ You would be responsible for the lives of hundreds of people,” he said quietly. “ You’d better not be thinking of anything like that.”

“ Of course we’re not, Bax ! ” said Jo, giving a false laugh. “ Just Jamie’s little joke. But just the same, there are some nasty people around—people who might want to damage your tunnel. You ought to keep that in mind.”

At that moment, Steve noticed Jo slipping his hand into his pocket . . . then a couple of seconds later there came the blast of a tremendous explosion from the dome !

Steve dashed to the door and pulled it open.

The dome was in chaos. Half the buildings and platforms had been destroyed and men were running about in confusion through the smoke left over from the explosion.

And then Steve felt a mighty wind tug at him.

In the roof of the dome, the tunnel had been torn free and the air was rushing out ! That was why the men were running—they were rushing to get space suits !

Steve slammed the door shut, strode to a cupboard and pulled out an emergency plastic space suit for himself and tossed another to his father.

He was about to give two to the Tarreli brothers when he saw that they were already putting on similar suits which they had pulled out of bags they carried.

Steve struggled into his suit, then heard his father’s voice come through the tiny earphones in the helmet.

“ *Quick—we’ve got to save the tunnel ! If it drifts away it will just curl up in space and we’ll never get it back !* ”

Steve opened the door again and ran out. He signalled to some of the engineers and they dashed to a number of “ flying grab ” machines parked near the wall of the dome.

Steve climbed into the saddle of one while an engineer took control of each of the others. Next instant, on jets of air, they all rose in ragged formation towards the roof.

All the air had now rushed out of the dome, and the tunnel was beginning to float away from the great rent where it had once been fixed.

The flying grabs passed through the gap in the roof and their mechanical “ hands ” gripped the torn edge of the tunnel and began to drag it back down to the dome.

Steadily the tunnel was forced back into place and secured by means of a temporary strip of self-sealing plastic. Later, it could be welded into place again.

Below him, Steve heard a whining noise as fresh air was pumped into the dome.

He returned to the ground, took off his space suit and went back to the office.

The Tarreli brothers were still with his father and broad grins swept across their faces as he entered.

"Well, our warning couldn't have come at a better time! Accidents will happen!" beamed Jo.

"Accident nothing!" Steve snapped angrily. "Somebody planted a bomb! And if only I could prove you had something to do with it——"

"Us?" protested Jamie Tarreli in a shocked tone.

Just then Hugh Tavener, Bax's chief engineer, walked into the office.

"It was a bomb all right," he said gruffly. "There was a suspicious character hanging about just before it went off but he escaped through an air lock!"

"Then let's get after him!" Steve exclaimed. "Come on, Hugh. We'll take the Moon hopper!"

Putting on space suits again, they went through the air lock and outside the dome.

Hugh Tavener scanned the bleak, dead landscape.

"There he is!" the engineer said heatedly. "Over there!"

Steve looked and saw a tiny figure. Because of the low gravity of the Moon, he was moving rapidly in leaps and bounds.

Steve opened the door of a small garage and vaulted

on to the saddle of the Moon hopper—a small vehicle consisting of an engine, caterpillar tracks and a small rocket motor. While Steve started the engine, Hugh Tavener jumped up beside him.

The machine trundled out at fifty miles per hour. Then Steve squeezed a lever, and from under the hopper twin spurts of rocket flame lashed the lunar surface.

The hopper leaped from the ground and travelled in a long arc which took it halfway to the horizon. As they touched ground again, Steve pressed the controls once more and it took another exhilarating "hop."

This one took them to within a few yards of the fleeing man. Together they tumbled from the hopper and charged after him.

The suspected saboteur offered no resistance when Steve seized him, because he didn't want to risk puncturing his space suit!

They took him back to the dome and within minutes were in the office.

"I never did it!" The prisoner, who had a dark, hard face and bristly black moustache, protested immediately. "I saw the explosion, but I never did it!"

"Then why were you running away?" Steve demanded.

"Going for a walk."

"And I suppose you'll tell us next that the Tarreli brothers didn't pay you to plant that bomb, which I imagine Jo Tarreli triggered by means of a pocket radio transmitter!"

"No, he certainly didn't! I tell you I didn't do it, either! What's more, you've no right to hold me here!"

Steve noticed a smug look pass between him and Jo Tarreli.

"Yes," Jamie Tarreli said indignantly, "and we strongly object to these accusations."

Ronald Bax sighed. "They're right, Steve. We've got no proof. We shall have to let them go."

As the three men walked out of the office Jo Tarreli turned and cast a crafty glance at the owner of the Astral Engineering Company.

"You see how easy it is?" he said. "Think carefully, now. Fifteen million pounds can be yours. But if you put this tunnel into commercial operation even for one day you'll get nothing! What's more, you won't have a tunnel either!"

Slamming the door, he went out.

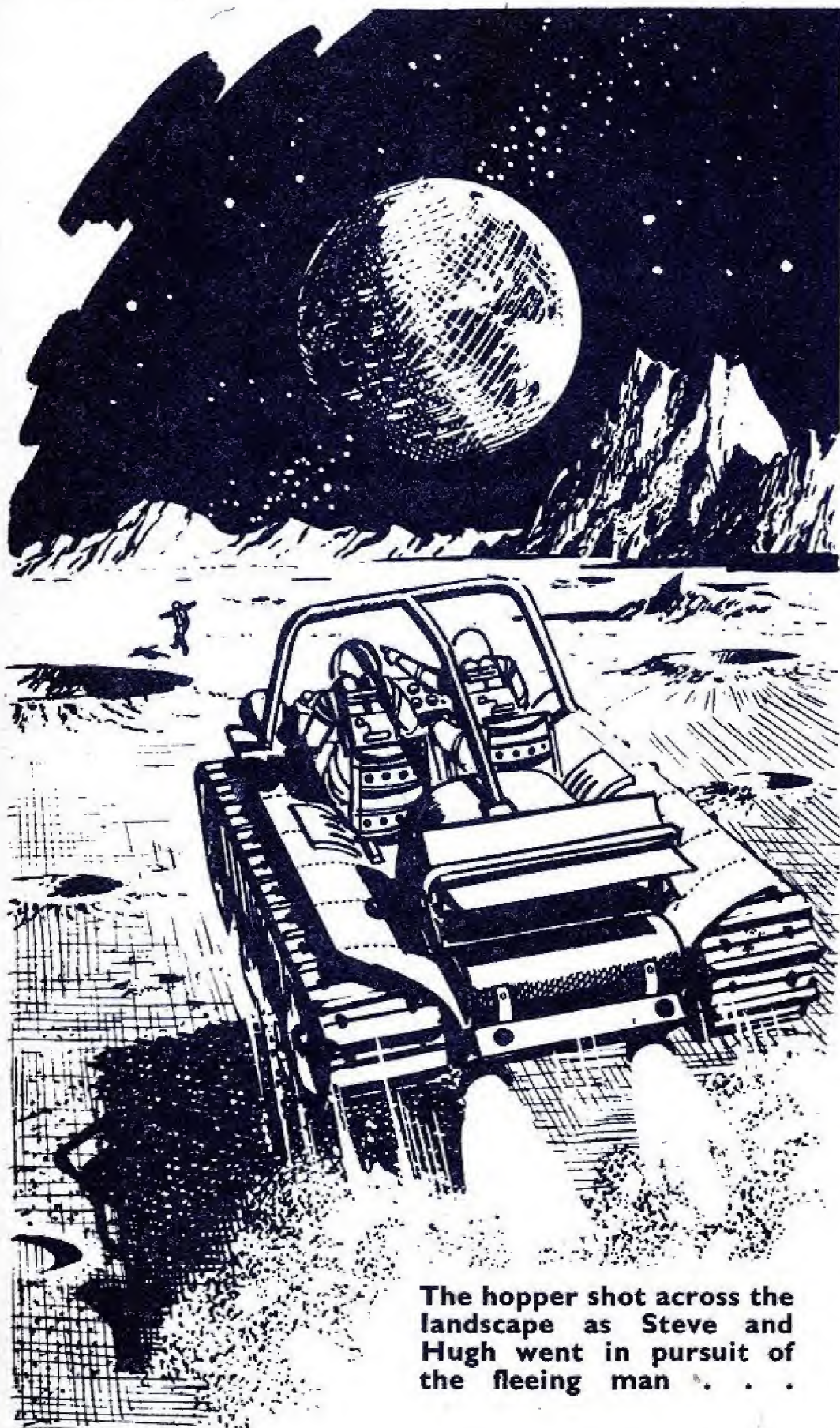
"Phew!" Steve said. "He couldn't put it any plainer than that, could he?"

"He couldn't," his father answered shortly. "But threats will get him nowhere with me. The tunnel goes into service next week!"

SPACE-AGE SABOTEURS

WOOSH!

This was the noise the tunnel made every time the great cap which separated it from the dome was opened, because the tunnel was filled with



The hopper shot across the landscape as Steve and Hugh went in pursuit of the fleeing man . . .

rarified air to permit planes to travel down it faster. It had just begun to operate. Two hours earlier Steve had watched the first train leave, loaded with excited Moon colonists making their first trip to Earth, for normal space travel had been far too expensive for them.

With a roar and a rattle, it had set off down the lower section of the tunnel, which was separated from the upper "flying" section by a roof.

Now, waiting to take off from the floor of the dome, was the first air flight.

The big jet plane was specially designed to meet the unusual conditions of the tunnel.

From the control room Steve had watched the plane load up with passengers and freight. He had noticed ten men go aboard who didn't look like colonists—hard-looking characters all identically dressed. But he was far too busy to give them a second thought.

The plane, which should have taken off an hour earlier, had been delayed by an emergency. An epidemic of Moon fever, a rare disease contracted from local bacteria, had broken out on Earth. The only known cure—another form of bacteria—was also found on the Moon and a case of it was being collected now for shipment to Earth.

This was an excellent example of the Moon tunnel's usefulness. There was currently no spaceship on the Moon, and one could not have travelled from Earth and returned with the antidote in time to save the victims' lives.

Even now it would be touch and go.

Steve saw the crate containing the precious remedy being wheeled out to the plane. Then his father came into the control room.

"Right, we're ready to go!" he said.

With a whistle of jets the big plane, known as *Selena*, took off and circled the dome slowly.

WOOSH! The cap of the tunnel opened and the aircraft shot through. Then the cap slammed shut

again and pumps replenished the dome's thinned air.

"On her way!" Steve's father cried excitedly, "We're in business!"

It was hours later that an incredible thing happened . . . Jo Tarreli came staggering into the control room, a look of agony on his face.

"Hello!" Steve said in surprise. "Where's your brother?"

"He's . . . he's on Earth!" gasped Tarreli. "He went back a week ago—and he's got the Moon fever!"

"Sorry to hear it," said Ronald Bax. "But don't worry, he'll be all right. There's a crate of antidote on its way—thanks to the Moon tunnel!"

Surprisingly, Tarreli moaned. "I know . . . I tried to get here in time to stop the plane . . . oh! What shall I do?"

"You tried to stop the plane?" Steve asked in astonishment.

Jo Tarreli looked at him, the agony on his face even stronger. "Mr. Bax, that plane is due to blow up and take part of the tunnel with it."

"Ten of my men are on board," Tarreli continued breathlessly. "By now they will have seized control of the plane and planted a bomb. Before it explodes they'll escape through the wall of the tunnel and be picked up by one of my ships. The idea was to prove that the tunnel's unsafe so that nobody would use it. But now the antidote won't get to Earth and my brother will perish!"

"Your brother!" Steve exploded. "What about the other two hundred passengers on board *Selena*? What about all the people on the train, who will be suffocated when all the air escapes into space? Didn't you care about *them*?"

"Never mind about that now, Steve," his father said grimly. "We've got to contact the plane."

Quickly he operated some controls on his desk and a few moments later a television screen flickered into life.

"My brother's got Moon fever!" Tarreli gasped, staggering into the control room.



"Control room calling *Selena*," Ronald Bax intoned. "Control room calling *Selena*."

A face appeared on the screen but it was not the face of the pilot! It was the man who had tried to blow up the dome a week ago!

Jo Tarreli shouldered his way past Steve's father.

"Ray," he said urgently into the screen. "We've gotta call off the job. Something's gone wrong."

"Don't make me laugh," the man replied without batting an eyelid.

"But Ray—it's for real. You're carrying a crate of disease antidote. My brother . . ."

"Stow it," Ray snarled. "I've seen these television tricks before."

"Television tricks?" Jo stammered.

"Sure! Listen, you creeps, I know that's not really Jo Tarreli I'm talking to. You can do anything on television nowadays. Some voice tapes, a trick camera—I've seen it all before."

"But it *is* me, Ray . . ."

"And anyway, if you think we'd just surrender and lay ourselves open for a long spell in prison, you must be crazy. I don't know how you found out about us, but things are going fine here. So long, suckers."

The screen went blank.

"He didn't believe me!" Jo moaned. "What're we gonna do? You've gotta save my brother!"

"There's just one chance!" Steve said suddenly. "The *Elizabeth*!"

The *Elizabeth* was an early prototype model of the *Selena*. It had a lot of faults that rendered it comparatively unsafe for tunnel flying, and it was much slower.

"You'll never catch up in that, Steve!" his father objected.

"I've got to try. We'll improve the engines. Come on, let's get to work!"

RACE AGAINST TIME

THE engineers worked furiously to try and give the *Elizabeth* a fighting chance.

Secretly, so that his father wouldn't know, Steve had some special crates carried aboard the aircraft.

At long last the plane took off with Steve at the controls and twenty sturdy engineers, including Hugh Tavener, sitting in the passenger section.

WOOSH!

With a sudden spurt of power they were in the tunnel, the cap closing behind them.

On all sides curved the shining plastic walls of the tunnel, stretching ahead for nearly a quarter of a million miles. It was lit by an endless line of electric lamps in the roof which ultimately merged into a haze of light.

And outside the thin walls of the tunnel lay nothing but cold, empty space.

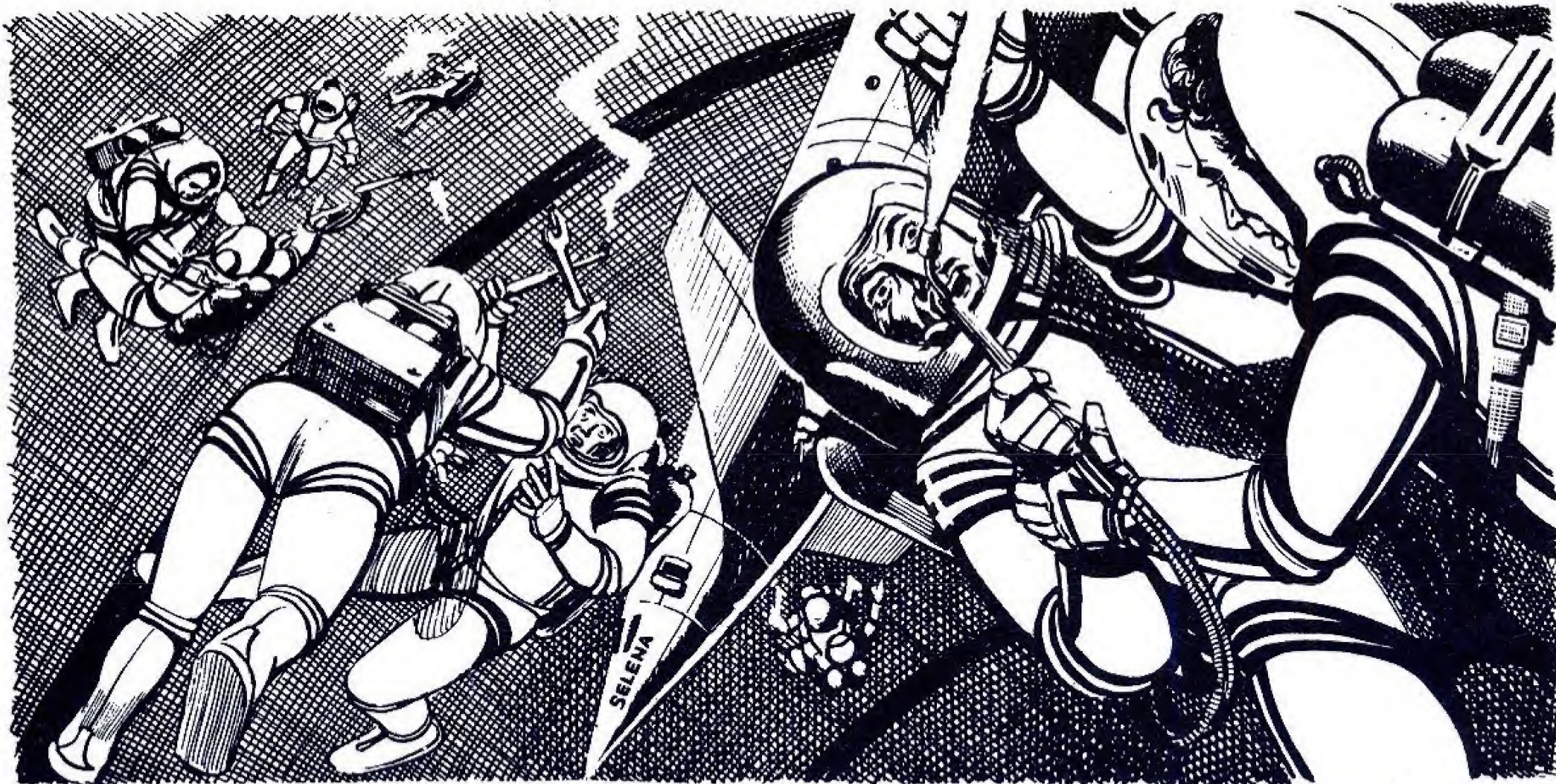
Steve nursed all the speed he could out of the *Elizabeth's* whining jets. But an hour later he began to pull back the throttle.

"It's no good," he said to Hugh Tavener, who had joined him in the control cabin. "We won't catch up like this."

"Steve!" exclaimed the chief engineer. "You're not giving up?"

"No," Steve replied grimly. "I didn't tell you before, but I've brought along some crates containing





A deadly battle raged in the tunnel as the crew came to grips with the saboteurs—and Steve struggled to avoid the searing flame from Ray's cutting torch!

rocket motors! We'll fix them to the hull and ride on those."

Hugh began to protest but Steve held up his hand to interrupt him.

"I know it's dangerous to use rockets inside the tunnel. If the flame touches the walls they'll melt and that'll be the end of everyone here. But if we don't do this the tunnel's finished anyway. *I'll just have to pilot the plane perfectly!*"

With the *Elizabeth* floating stationary in the thin air, Steve and the engineers worked frantically to bolt the rocket engines in place and connect up the fuel tanks. Then, with the white-faced engineers clustered round him, Steve started the rockets.

With a roar, flame lashed out behind them. They felt the aircraft buck under them, then it started to accelerate at a terrific pace. Steve was pressed back in his seat.

It was even more difficult than he had thought!

The *Elizabeth* behaved differently than if she had been under her own power, so it was difficult to handle her in the confined space!

Steve sweated with concentration. Straight as an arrow, the aircraft shot down the tunnel. At that speed, even the slightest deviation would have sent it careering against the walls!

And then Steve saw something ahead. It was the *Selena* and she was stationary!

Had they come too late? Swiftly and expertly he slowed down the *Elizabeth* to almost a standstill. Near the *Selena* ten figures in space suits were about to apply cutting torches to the wall of the tunnel!

"Quick!" Steve snapped. "Ten of you help me to deal with that lot! The rest go into the *Selena* with Hugh and find that bomb! It'll go off within minutes!"

As the engineers poured out of the *Elizabeth* the ten gangsters looked up, startled.

Next moment the scene was a confusion of flailing fists. Steve found himself facing the man called Ray, who turned his cutting torch on him!

Steve dodged, came in from an angle and delivered a chopping blow to the man's neck.

Inside the thin fabric of his space suit, Ray went limp.

Five minutes later the fight was over. The engineers, having the twin advantages of surprise and desperate anger, had made short work of the saboteurs.

Hugh Tavener appeared from within the *Selena*.

"The bomb's disarmed!" he shouted triumphantly. "The crew were tied up and the passengers were locked in their cabin."

"Well, I guess the *Selena* can continue her flight to Earth now," Steve replied, "with a cargo of future jail-birds!"

When Steve reported the incident to the police on Earth, constables were immediately sent to the Moon to arrest Jo Tarreli; and some months later he was sentenced to a long spell in prison along with his men.

Thanks to the antidote, his brother Jamie, who had taken no part in the sabotage, recovered from the Moon fever, as did all the people who had suffered from it.

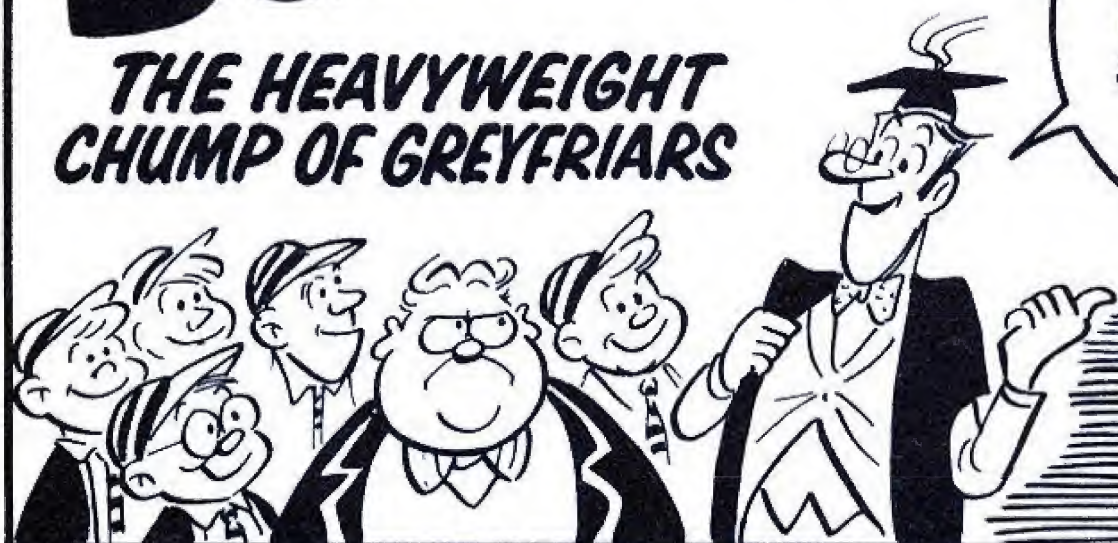
But Jamie was unable to control the vast Spaceways company without the aid of his brother and soon the once-wealthy firm was in financial difficulty.

Because of this, the Astral tunnel began to flourish as the quickest and safest way to travel to the Moon . . . and this was the greatest reward that Steve could possibly have received for his courageous action!

THE END

BILLY BUNTER

THE HEAVYWEIGHT CHUMP OF GREYFRIARS



WE NEED HOME-MADE MODELS FOR OUR EXHIBITION! I'LL GIVE A PRIZE FOR THE BEST! I SHALL WANT ALL BOYS TO MAKE SOMETHING!

GREYFRIARS EXHIBITION OF MODERN PROGRESS

I'LL MAKE MYSELF SCARCE! I'M NOT DOING ANY MORE WORK THAN I CAN HELP!



LATER...

YOUNG JONES IS WORKING HARD ON A MODEL! WHEN HE'S FINISHED I'LL GRAB IT!



THAT'S DONE! NOW I'LL GET HELP TO MOVE IT TO THE EXHIBITION ROOM!

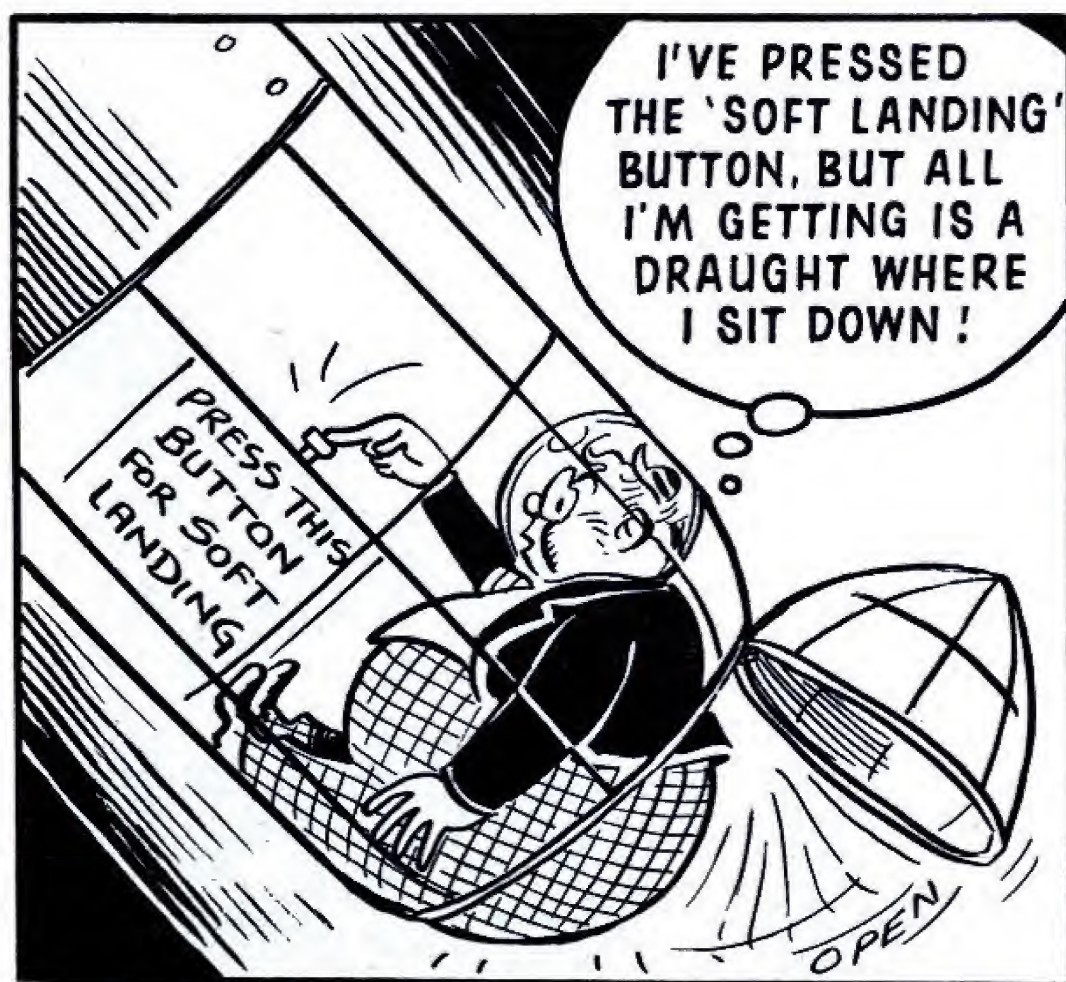
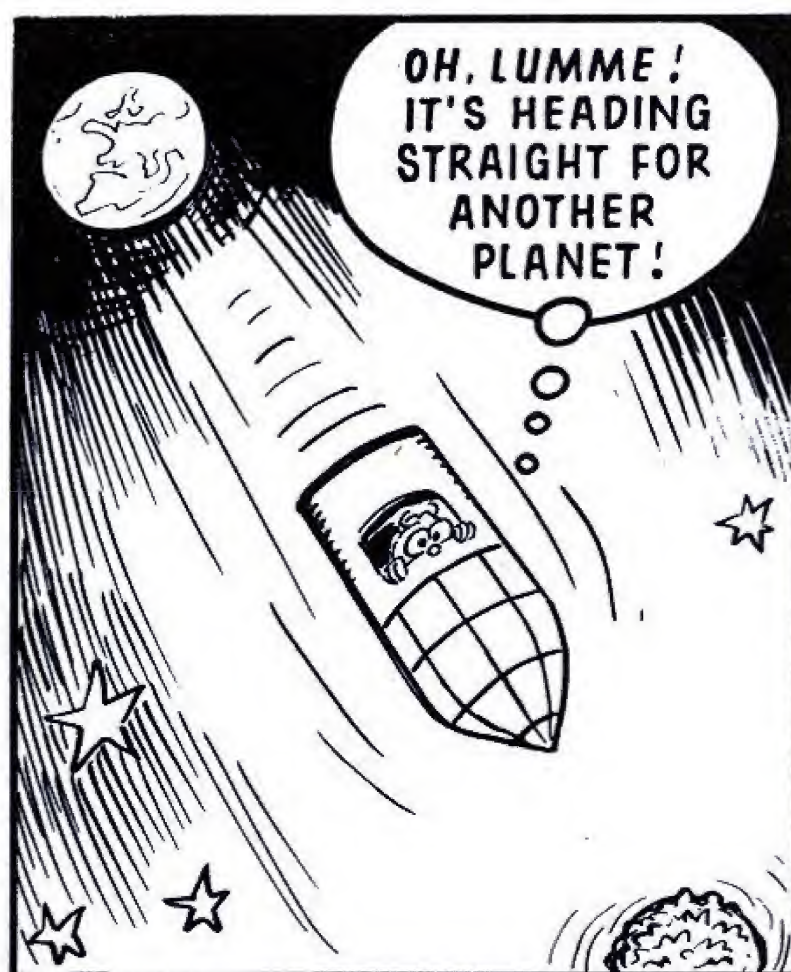
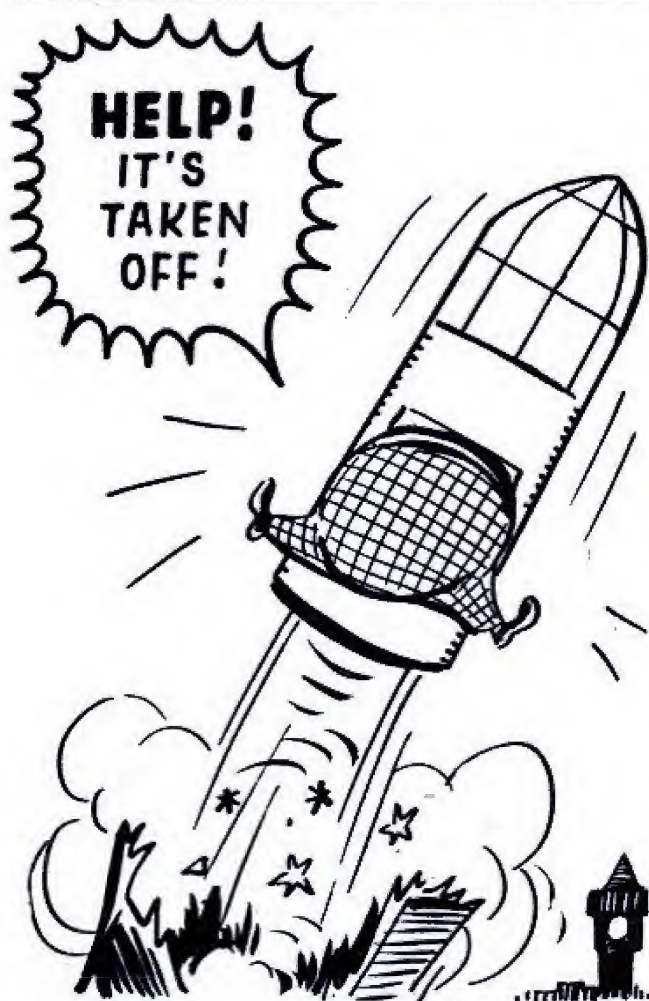
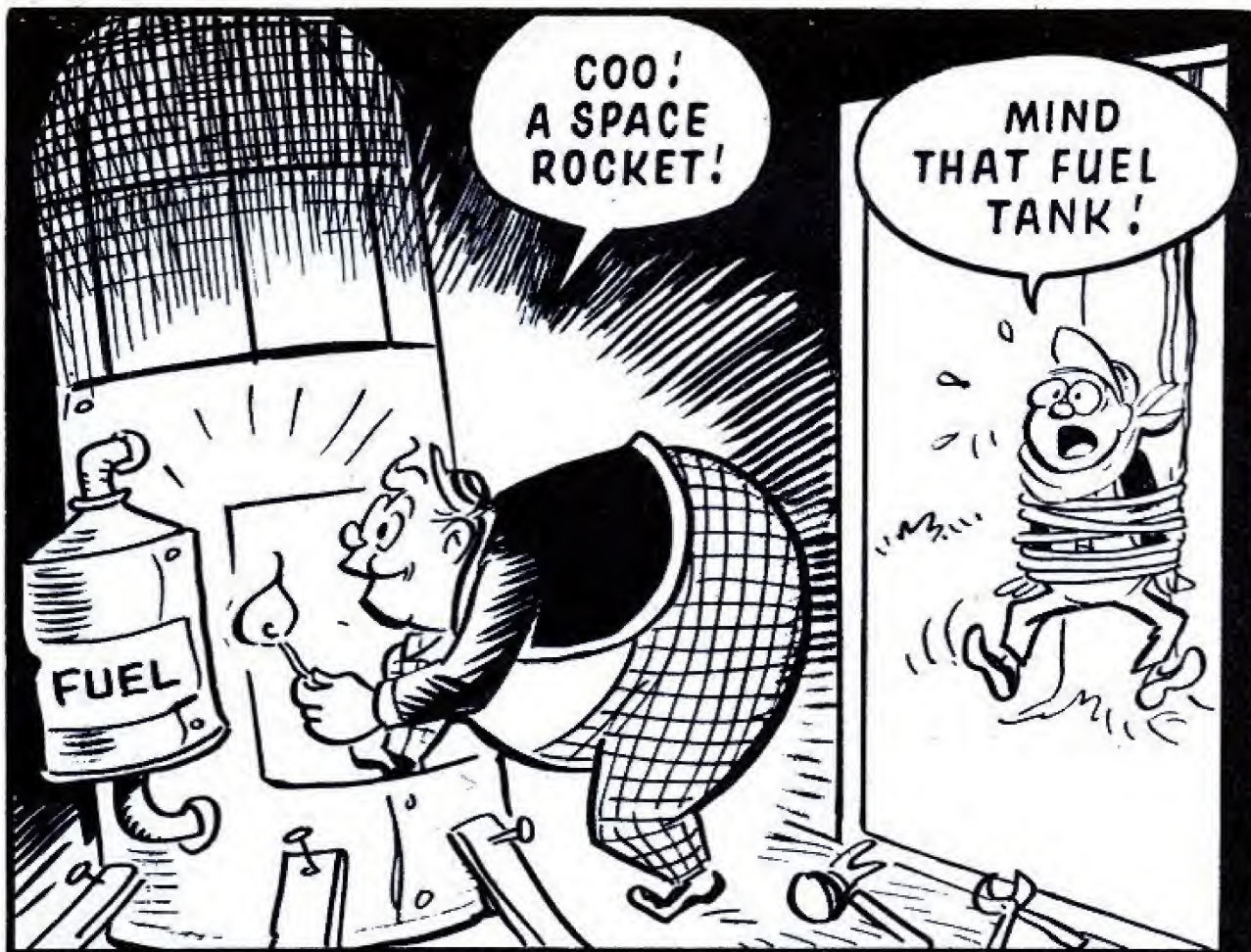


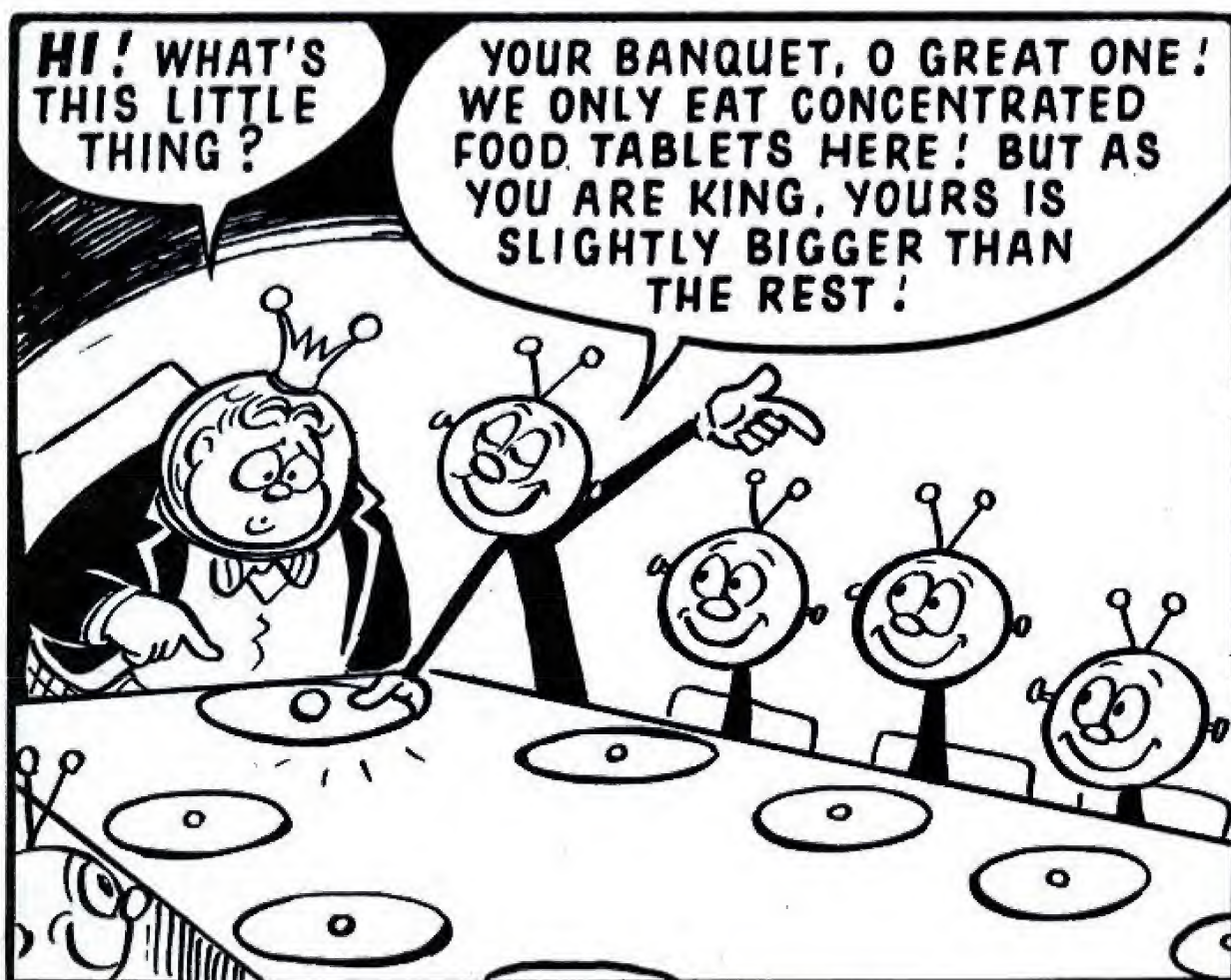
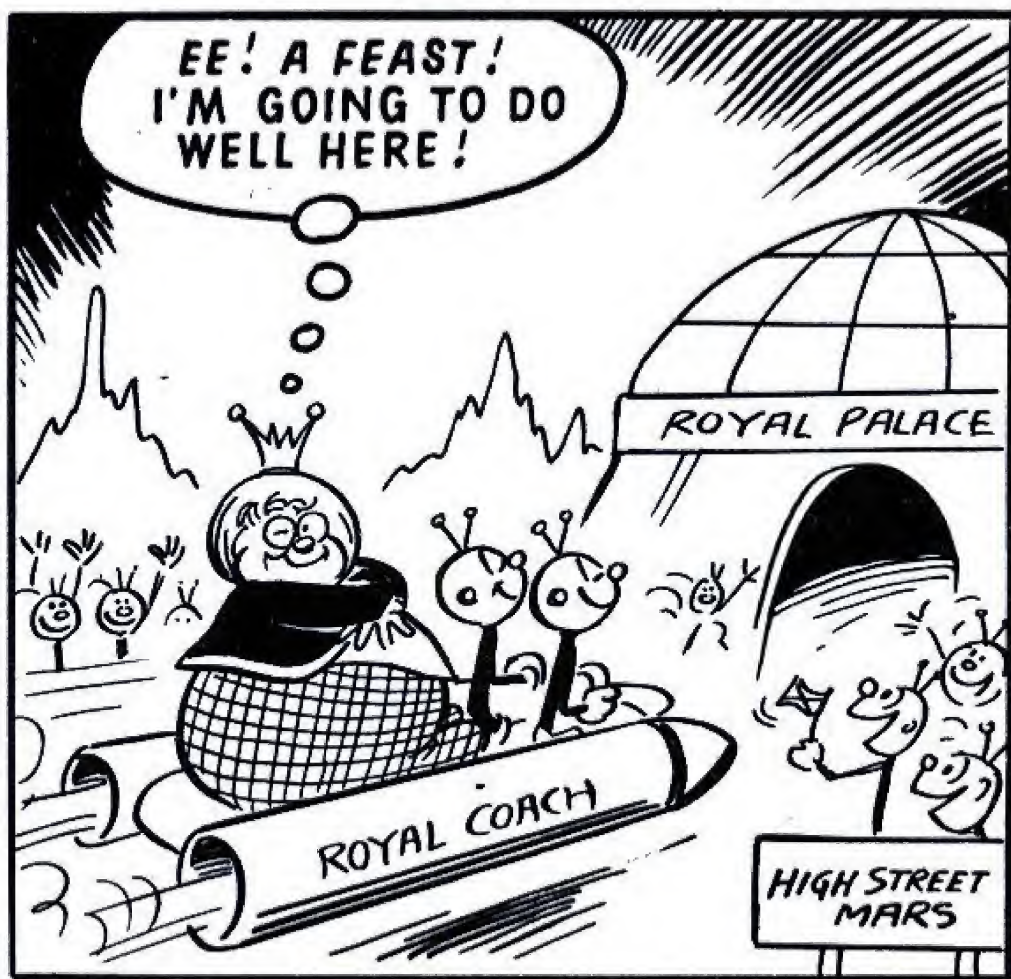
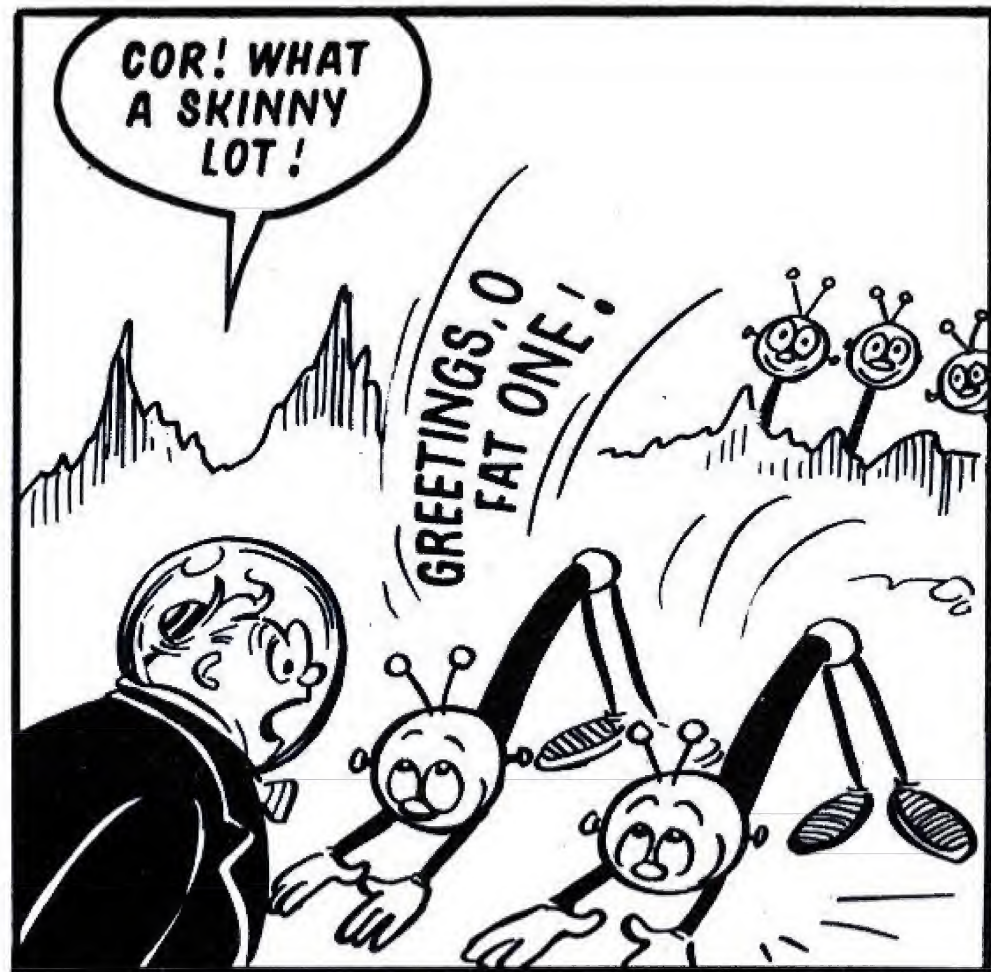
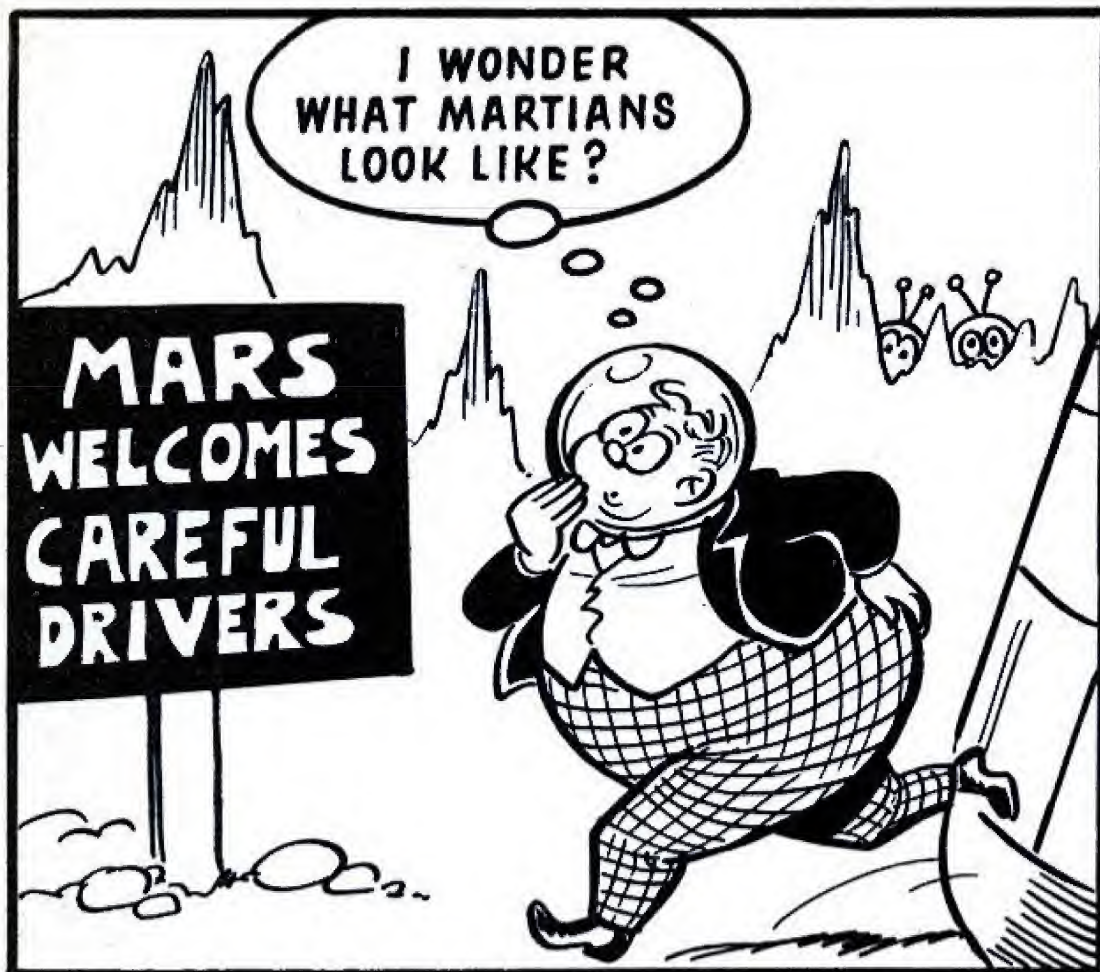
TEE. HEE! YOU'LL NEED HELP TO GET OUT OF THIS! I'M GOING TO PRETEND THAT I MADE YOUR MODEL!

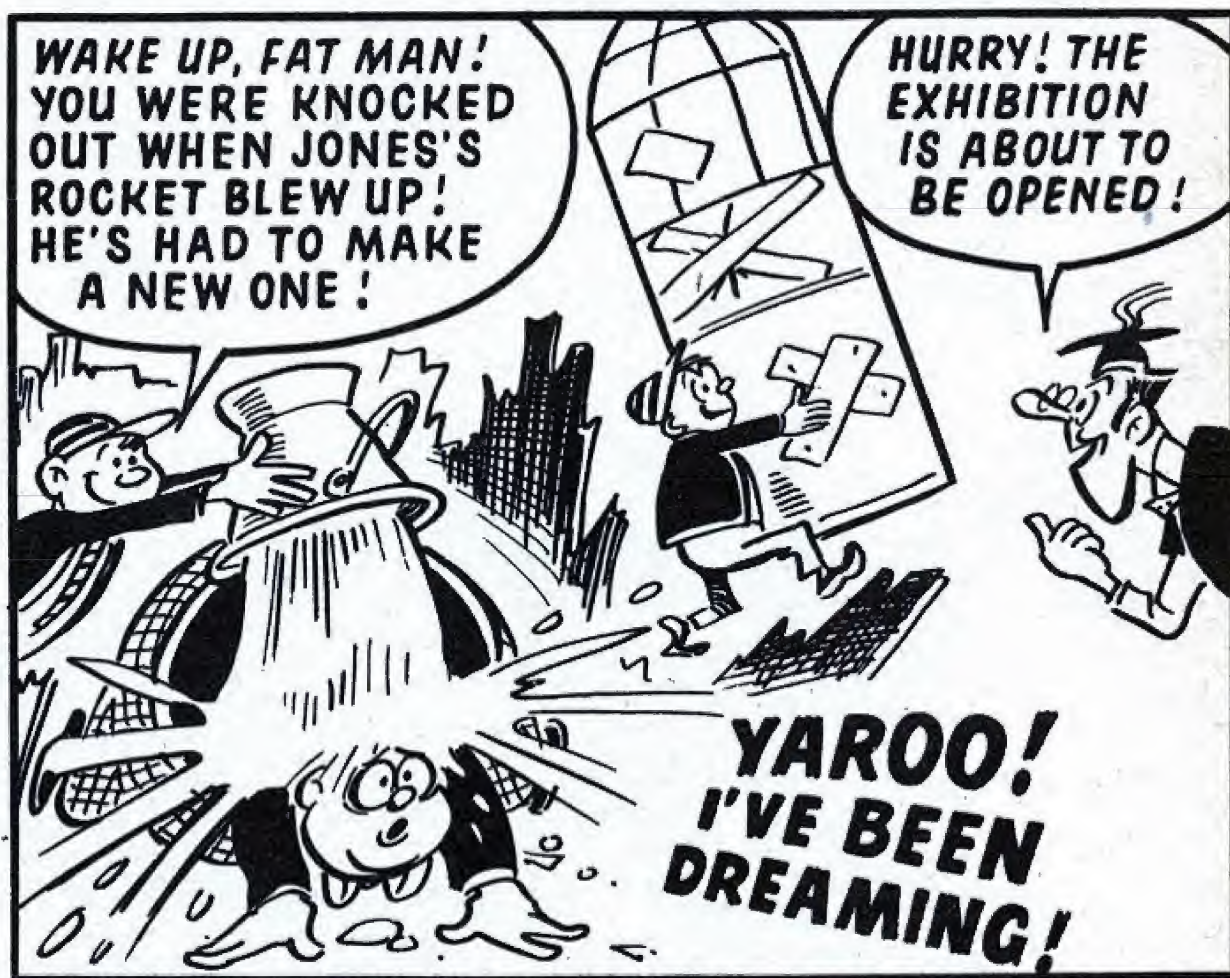
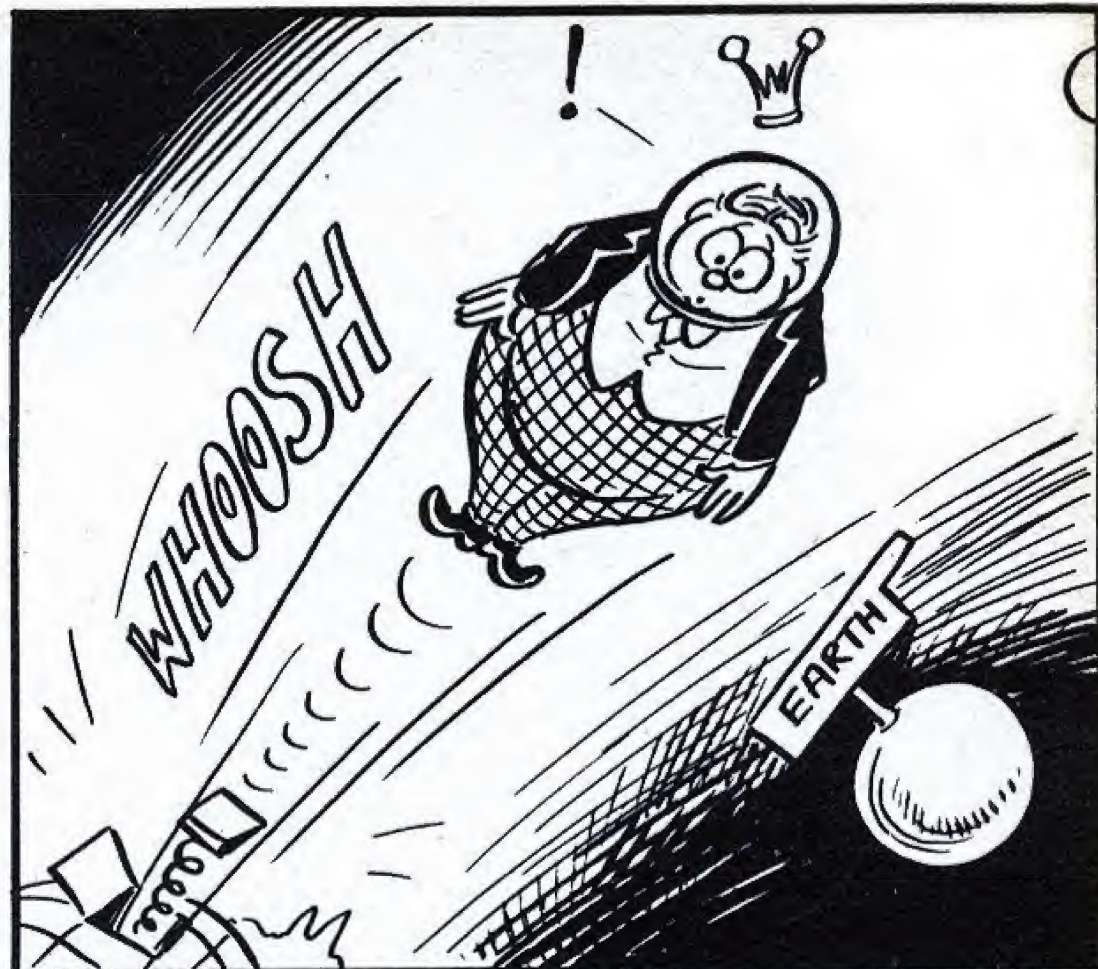


IT'S DARK IN HERE! I CAN'T SEE WHAT SORT OF MODEL IT IS SO I'LL STRIKE A MATCH!









THE WAR-TORN PLANET



FAR AWAY IN THE REMOTENESS OF SPACE LAY THE PLANET MIRKA.. WHEN MAN HAD CONQUERED MOST OF THE KNOWN UNIVERSE, THIS MYSTERY PLANET REMAINED UNEXPLORED, SHROUDED BY THICK CLOUD WHICH BLOTED OUT MOST OF ITS SURFACE, BUT IT WASN'T GOING TO REMAIN A MYSTERY MUCH LONGER...!



SPACE-CRUISER X 4 HAD PENETRATED THE DEEP CLOUD AND WAS ABOUT TO LAND!

MIRKA —
HERE WE COME!



BUT LITTLE DID THE TWO-MAN CREW KNOW THAT THE ROCKET'S PROGRESS WAS UNDER OBSERVATION!

IT'S AN EARTHLING SHIP — BUT IT'S GOING TO LAND ON ENEMY TERRITORY!



FOR YEARS MIRKA HAD BEEN RAVAGED BY WAR. THE TWO STATES OF ETARKA AND LUKA WERE LOCKED TOGETHER IN A BITTER STRUGGLE — AND KULUK, CHIEF OF THE ETARKANS, WAS WORRIED..

I DON'T GIVE MUCH FOR THE EARTHLINGS' CHANCES IF THEY'RE CAPTURED BY THE LUKANS..!

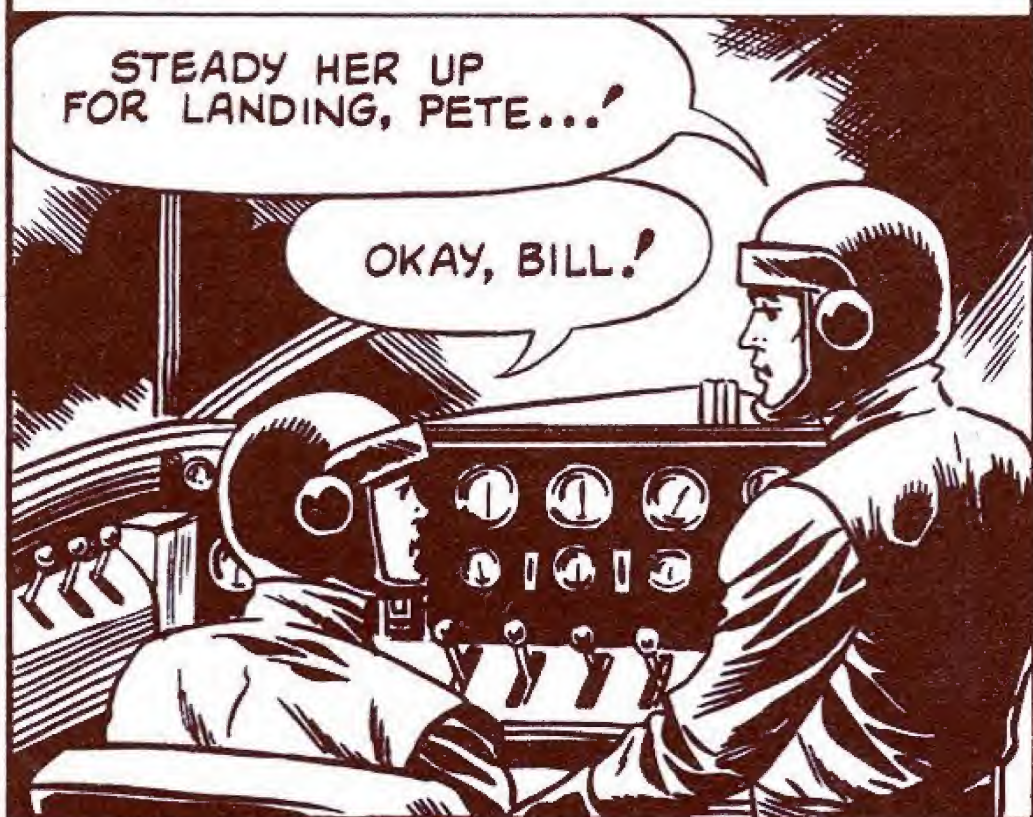
BUT THERE'S NOTHING WE CAN DO TO SAVE THEM, MIGHTY ONE!



MEANWHILE, INSIDE THE CONTROL CABIN OF X4...

STEADY HER UP FOR LANDING, PETE...!

OKAY, BILL...!



FIRING RETRO ROCKETS — NOW...!

WE'RE DOWN...!



PETE RANSOM AND BILL WILLIAMS DISEMBARKED AND LOOKED AROUND...

BIT OF A DISAPPOINTMENT, ISN'T IT?

SURE... LOOKS LIKE THE PLANET'S COMPLETELY DEAD. NOTHING COULD LIVE HERE...!



DON'T BE TOO SURE, PETE...! WE KNOW OTHER BARREN PLANETS WHICH ARE INHABITED...! LET'S SEARCH A LITTLE FARTHER...!

WHATEVER YOU SAY, BILL — BUT I RECKON IT'S A WASTE OF TIME...!



BUT THEN...



GOOD GRIEF!
LOOK AT THAT!

A SKELETON!



HUMAN, TOO,
BY THE LOOK OF IT!



IT'S PROOF THAT
LIFE EXISTS HERE,
ANYWAY!

YES!
LET'S PRESS ON
FARTHER!

EVENTUALLY...

GREAT SCOTT! AN EGYPTIAN-TYPE TEMPLE! LET'S TAKE A CLOSER LOOK!



THERE'S THE ENTRANCE!

WELL — WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR? IN WE GO!



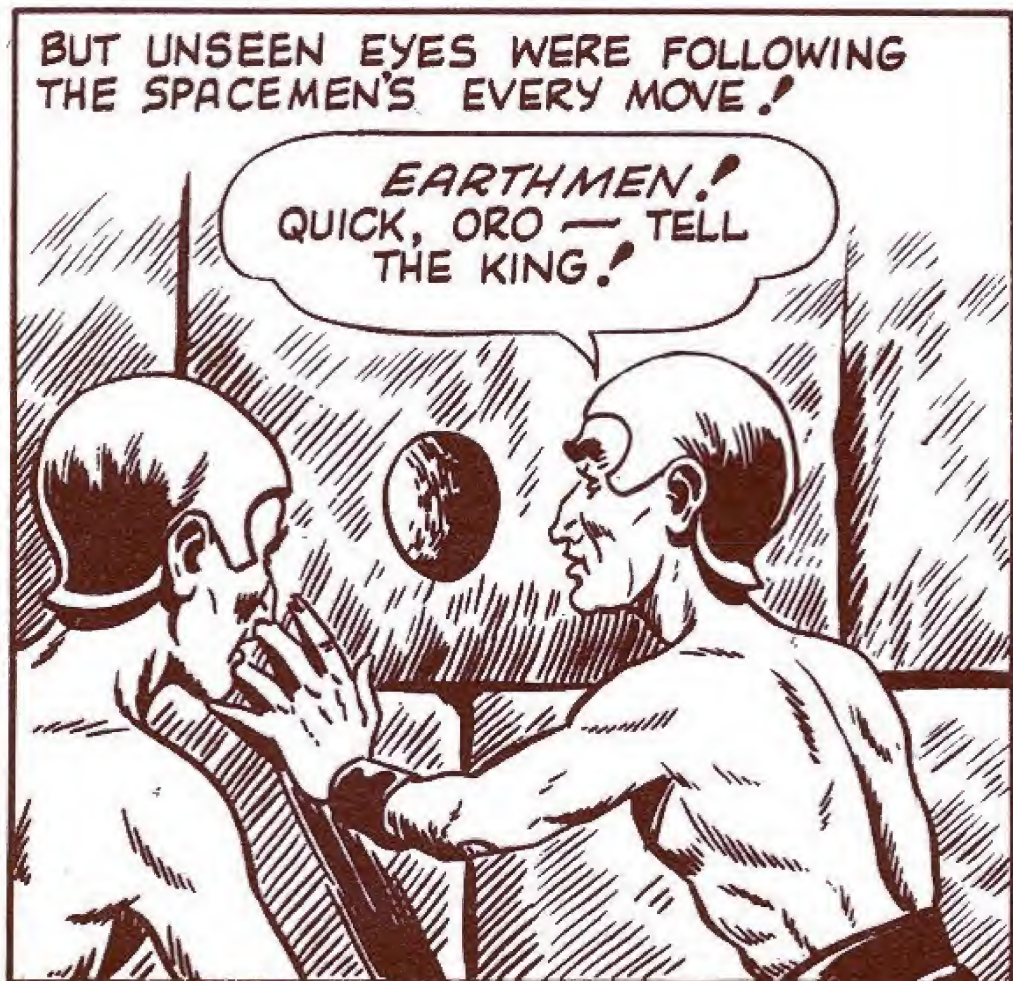
BILL FOUND A FLIGHT OF STEPS LEADING DOWN INTO THE DEPTHS OF THE BUILDING, AND...

HEY, PETE! THERE'S AN AXE DOWN HERE — AND IT LOOKS PRETTY NEW!



BUT UNSEEN EYES WERE FOLLOWING THE SPACEMEN'S EVERY MOVE!

EARTHMEN! QUICK, ORO — TELL THE KING!



TATROK, KING OF LUKA, SNARLED CRUELLY WHEN HE HEARD THE NEWS...

SO — THEY HAVE COME AT LAST, EH? BRING THEM TO ME, ORO! I CAN MAKE GOOD USE OF THEM!



PETE AND BILL WERE EXPLORING FARTHER WHEN...

WELCOME, EARTHMEN!
MY MASTER, THE GREAT TATROK,
LORD OF LUKA, WISHES TO MEET YOU!

WELL,
I'LL BE—!

GOOD
GRIEF!

ORO LED THE TWO MEN INTO TATROK'S
THRONE-ROOM...

AH, EARTHMEN... AT LAST
YOU HAVE COME TO EXPLORE
OUR POOR PLANET!

YES, SIR! AND
IT'S PRETTY BARREN,
BY THE LOOK OF IT!

YOU ARE RIGHT! MIRKA IS
A BACKWARD PLANET — RAVAGED BY
WAR! ONLY WHEN THE STRUGGLE HAS
ENDED WILL WE BE ABLE TO BUILD CITIES,
ROADS, AND BRIDGES TO GIVE OUR PEOPLE
A HAPPIER LIFE!

BUT WHO
ARE YOU FIGHTING?

TATROK'S EYES GLEAMED SLYLY...

THE ETARKANS, EARTHMAN —
LED BY KULUK, MY IMPLACABLE ENEMY!
HE IS PLEDGED TO THE DOWNFALL OF LUKA!
WITH YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF SCIENCE
YOU WILL BE ABLE TO HELP US GRIND
HIS CURSED STATE INTO THE DUST!

I DON'T TRUST
YOU, PAL!

STEADY ON! YOU'RE TAKING
A LOT FOR GRANTED — WE DIDN'T
COME HERE TO GET MIXED UP
IN A WAR!

YOU MEAN...
YOU REFUSE TO HELP ME?

TATROK SWUNG ROUND, HIS EYES
BLAZING WITH FURY.

IF THAT IS THE CASE, EARTHMAN —
YOUR FATE IS SEALED! YOU HAVE
REFUSED MY FRIENDSHIP... VERY WELL,
SEIZE THEM BOTH!

TATROK'S GUARDS LEAPT FORWARD...

HEY!
WAIT A MINUTE!..

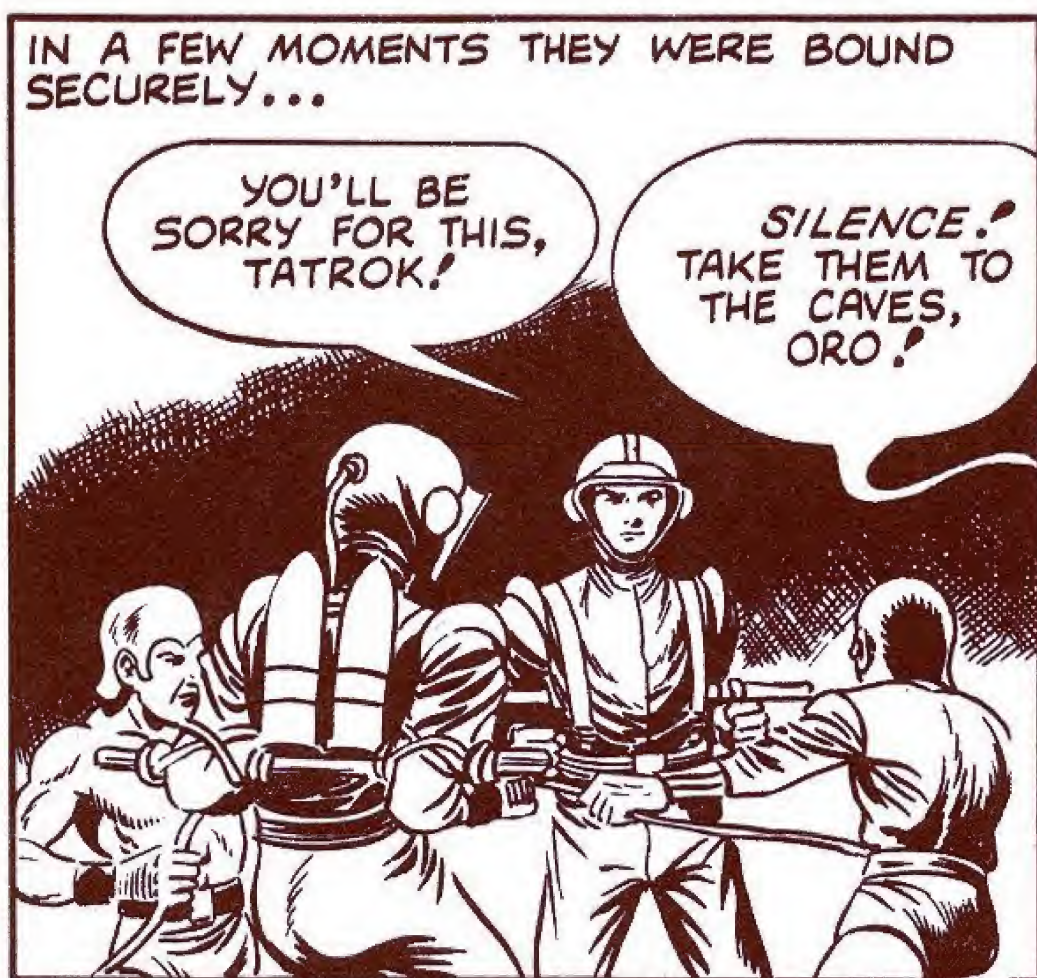
AAAGHH!



IN A FEW MOMENTS THEY WERE BOUND SECURELY...

YOU'LL BE
SORRY FOR THIS,
TATROK!

SILENCE!
TAKE THEM TO
THE CAVES,
ORO!



SOME MINUTES LATER...

THIS IS A PRETTY MESS, BILL!
THEY'VE UNTIED US BUT THEY'VE TAKEN
OUR HELMETS — AND WITHOUT THEM
WE WOULDN'T LIVE A SECOND
ON THE SURFACE.

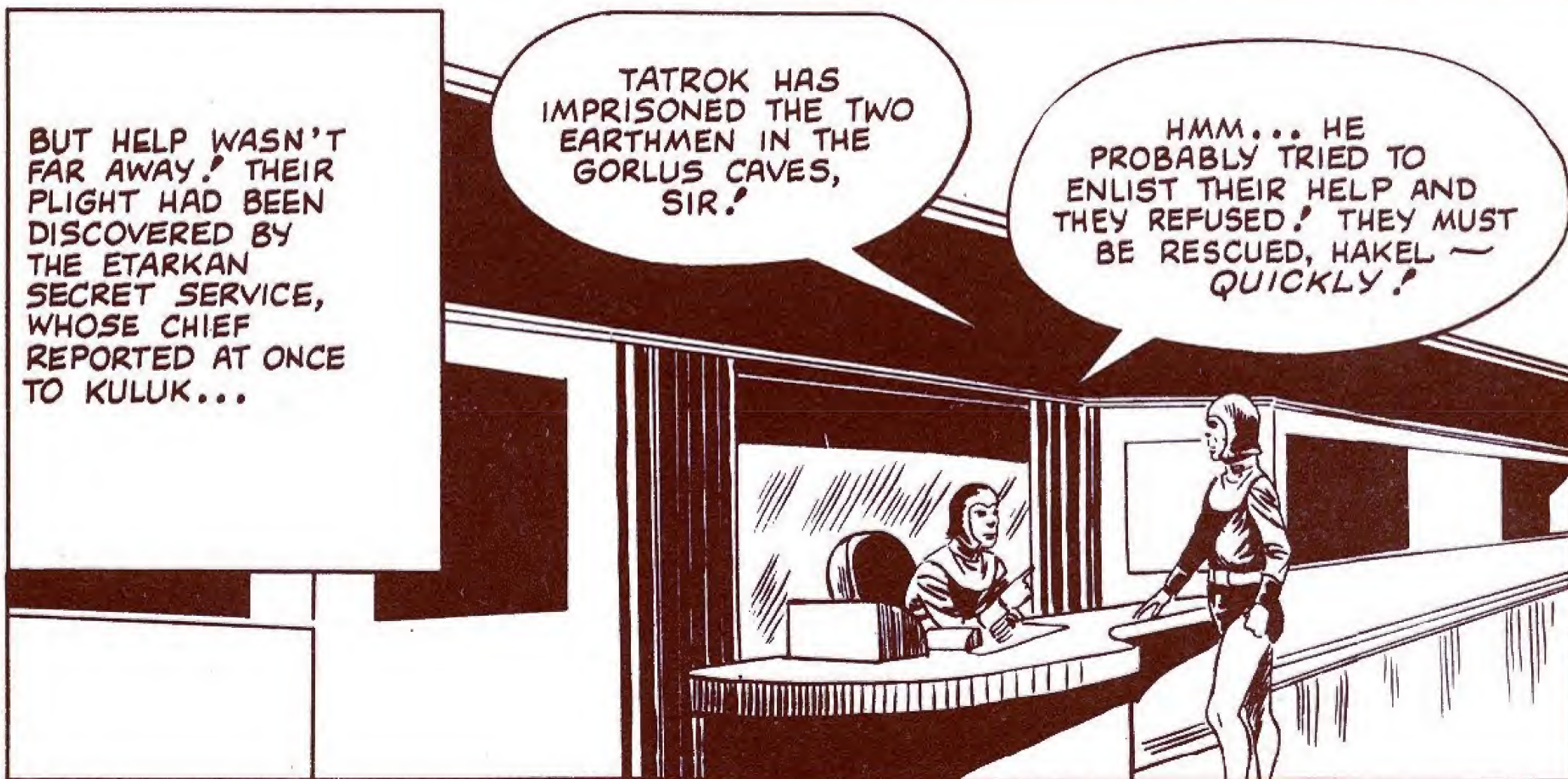
IF WE COULD EVER ESCAPE, THAT IS!



BUT HELP WASN'T
FAR AWAY! THEIR
PLIGHT HAD BEEN
DISCOVERED BY
THE ETARKAN
SECRET SERVICE,
WHOSE CHIEF
REPORTED AT ONCE
TO KULUK...

TATROK HAS
IMPRISONED THE TWO
EARTHMEN IN THE
GORLUS CAVES,
SIR!

HMM... HE
PROBABLY TRIED TO
ENLIST THEIR HELP AND
THEY REFUSED! THEY MUST
BE RESCUED, HAKEL —
QUICKLY!



KULUK FROWNED...

ORDER OMARK TO
CONTACT THEM! PERHAPS
HE CAN BREAK THROUGH
TATROK'S GUARD FORCE..!

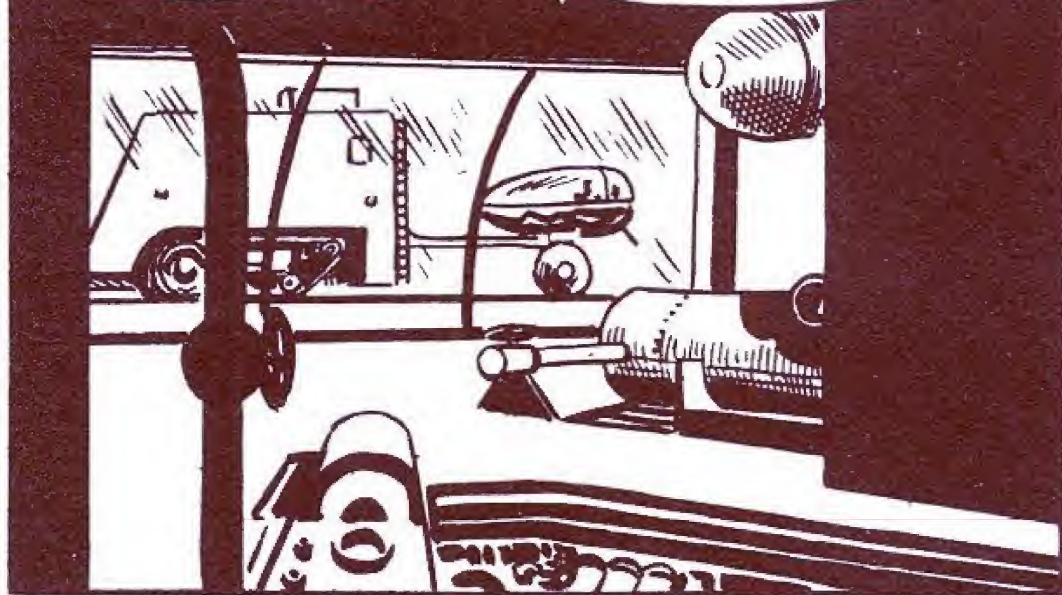
AT ONCE,
SIR..!



LATER...

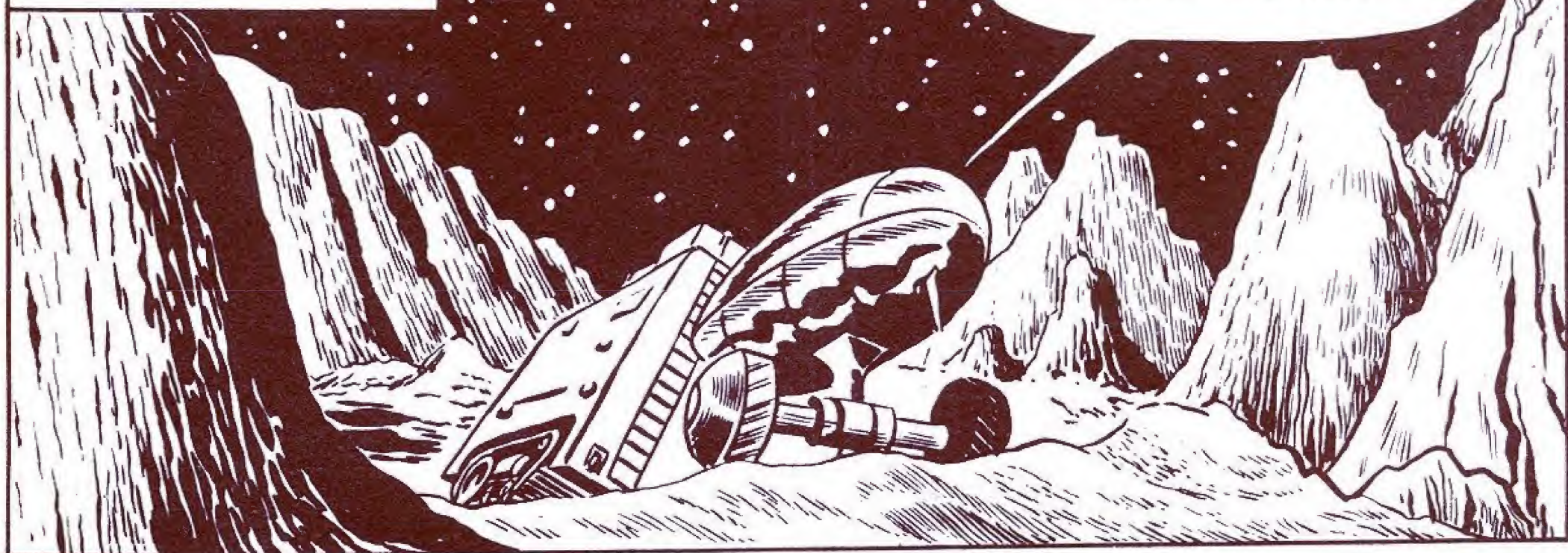
HERE IS
YOUR TRANSPORT,
OMARK..!

AH —
ATTACKSHIP ONE,
EH? I SHOULD BE
ABLE TO GET THROUGH
IN THAT..!



ATTACKSHIP ONE HAD BEEN SPECIALLY BUILT
TO TRAVEL OVER THE RUGGED MIRKAN LANDSCAPE
AT GREAT SPEED...

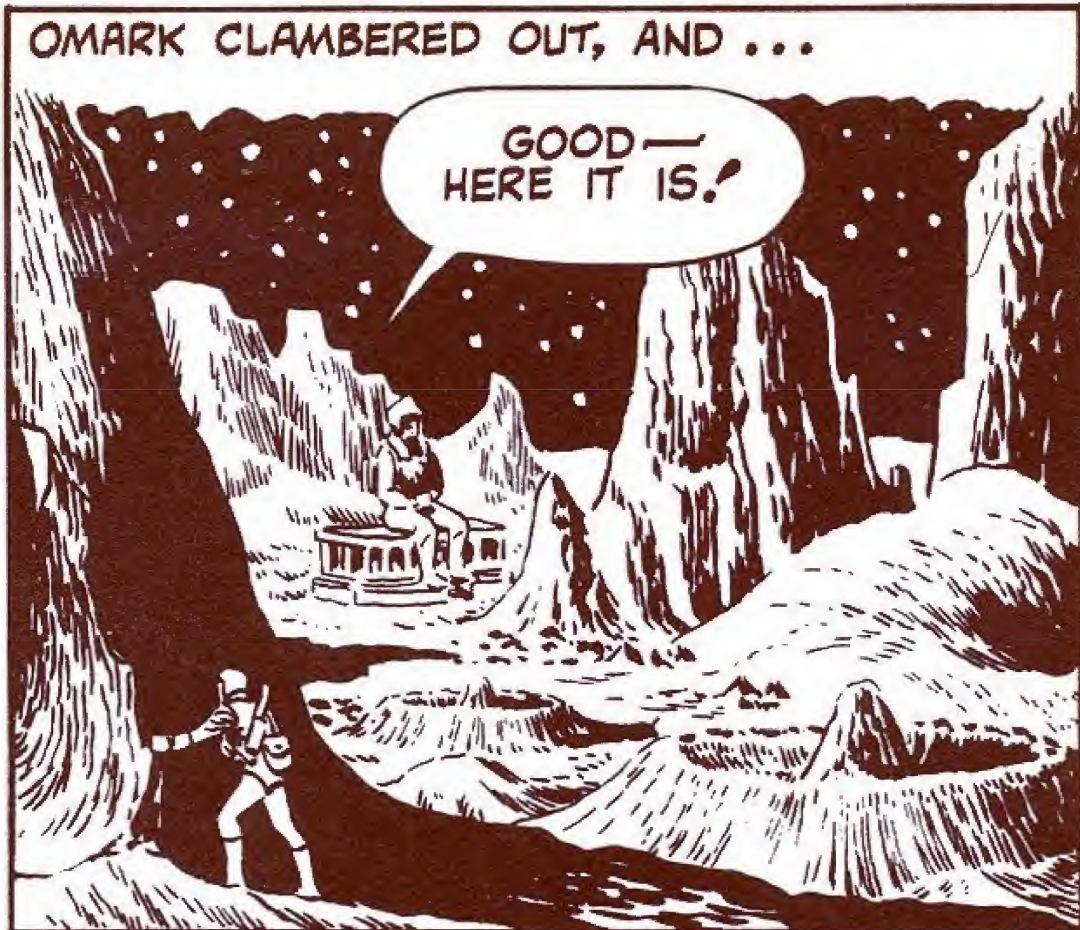
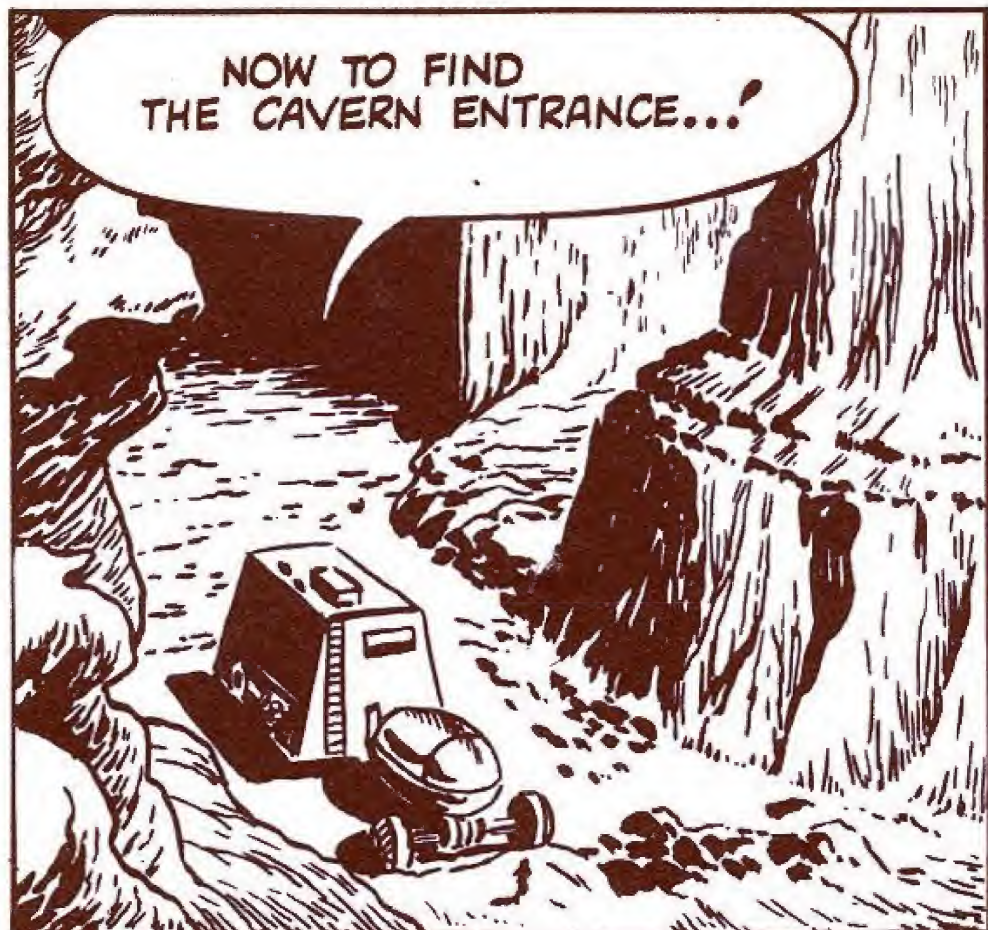
I HOPE THE EARTHMEN
LAST OUT UNTIL I CAN
REACH THEM..!



AN HOUR LATER...

NEARLY THERE!
ACTION AT LAST..!





THE LUKAN GUARDS HURRIED DOWN TO THE CAVERN...

THERE THEY ARE!

CAPTURE THEM!



OMARK ACTED WITH LIGHTNING SPEED...

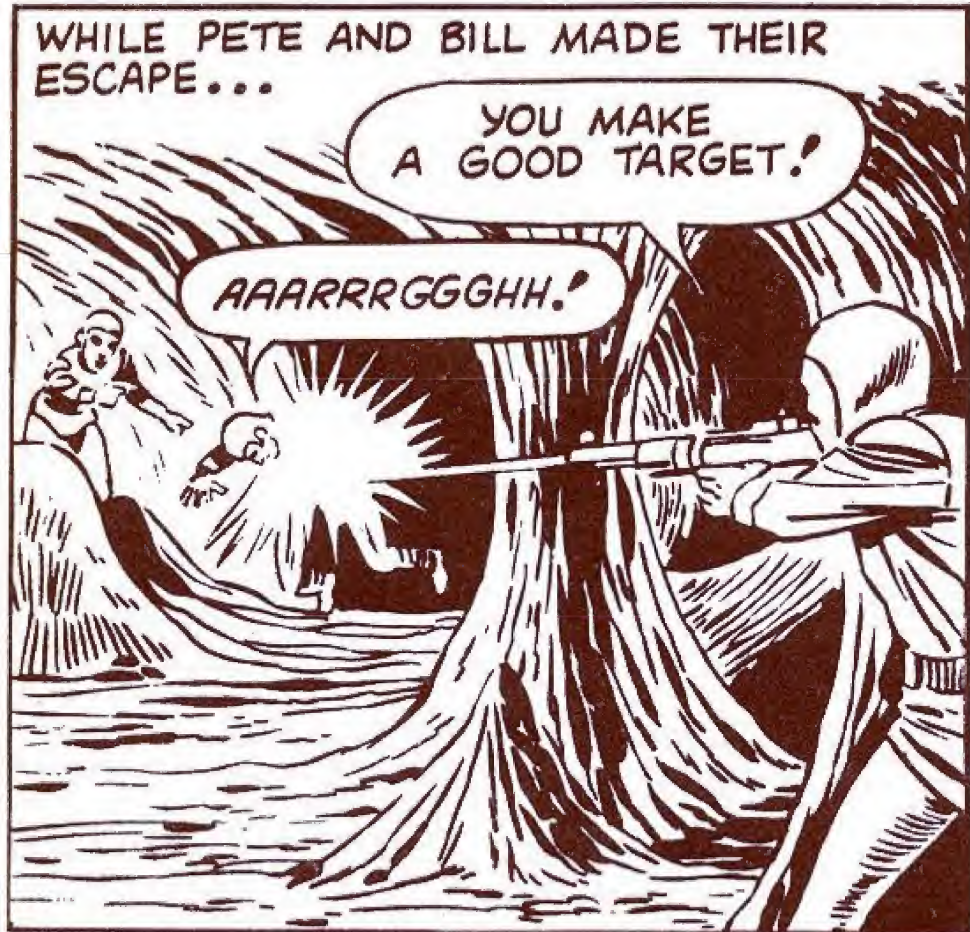
IN THOSE PACKS YOU WILL FIND CLOTHES — AND SPECIAL PILLS TO ENABLE YOU TO BREATHE FREELY ON THE SURFACE OF MIRKA! GO THAT WAY — I'LL KEEP OUR LUKAN FRIENDS BUSY!



WHILE PETE AND BILL MADE THEIR ESCAPE...

YOU MAKE A GOOD TARGET!

AAARRRGHH!



THEN, ON THE SURFACE...

BOOOOOM!



OMARK HAD REJOINED THE PALS...

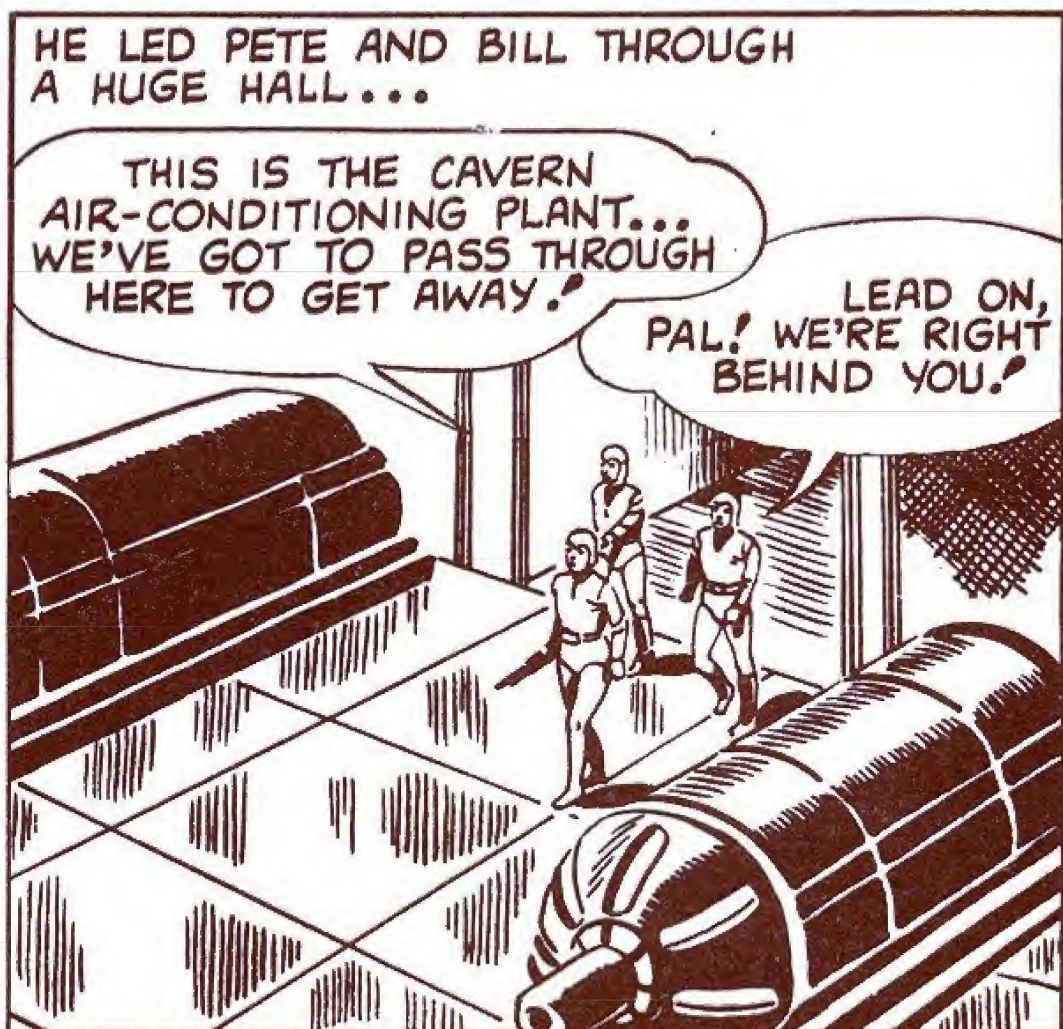
THEY'VE BLOWN UP THE CAVE ENTRANCE! QUICK — FOLLOW ME...



HE LED PETE AND BILL THROUGH A HUGE HALL...

THIS IS THE CAVERN AIR-CONDITIONING PLANT... WE'VE GOT TO PASS THROUGH HERE TO GET AWAY!

LEAD ON, PAL! WE'RE RIGHT BEHIND YOU!



MEANWHILE, KULUK, THE CHIEF OF THE ETARKANS, WAS FOLLOWING EVERY MOVE THROUGH HIS SPY T.V. SETS...

OMARK'S ESCAPE ROUTE HAS BEEN BLOCKED... HE'LL NEVER GET AWAY THROUGH THE AIR PLANT! SEND A RESCUE FORCE OUT AT ONCE!

YES, SIR!



WITHIN MINUTES, THE RESCUE FORCE WAS READY TO MOVE!



TOP SPEED!
WE MUST REACH OMARK
AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!



WHILE THE RESCUE FORCE SPED ON ITS WAY, TATROK WAS VENTING HIS ANGER ON THE GUARD COMMANDER...

FOOL!
YOU LET THE EARTHMEN
ELUDE YOU! RECAPTURE
THEM IMMEDIATELY!

B-BUT--!



YOU DARE TO QUESTION
MY ORDERS?

IF WE USE OUR GUNS IN
THE AIR PLANT THE VIBRATION
WILL DEMOLISH THE BUILDING..!



THE ENRAGED KING SNATCHED
ORO'S RAY GUN...

COWARDS!
I WILL SHOW YOU HOW
TO RECAPTURE THEM!
MARCH!



OMARK AND THE TWO EARTHMEN HAD REACHED
THE END OF THE AIR CONDITIONING PLANT,
WHEN...

STAY —
I HEAR FOOTSTEPS!



IT WAS TATROK AND HIS MEN!

THERE THEY ARE,
YOU FOOLS! FIRE! FIRE!

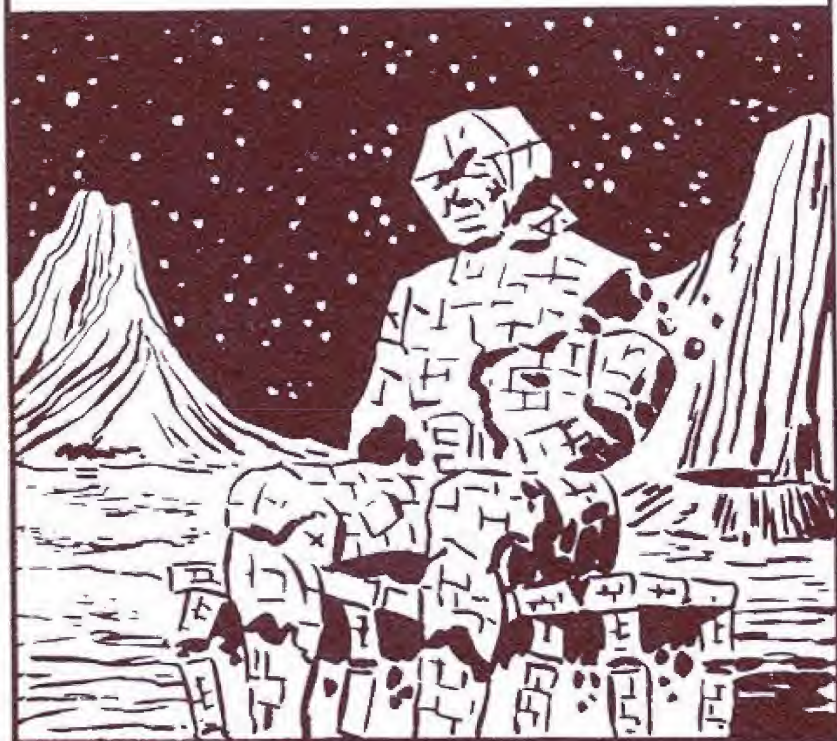


MEANWHILE, THE PANIC-STRICKEN LUKAN
PEOPLE WERE FLEEING FROM THEIR CITY..

TATROK'S OUT OF HIS MIND...
HE WILL BLOW UP THE AIR CONDITIONING
PLANT — AND OUR HOMES!



THEN A TERRIFYING RUMBLE
SHOOK THE PLAIN! THE VIBRATIONS
FROM TATROK'S RAY GUN HAD
LOOSENED THE FOUNDATIONS OF
THE OLD BUILDING, AND...



OMARK AND THE EARTHMEN ESCAPED IN THE
NICK OF TIME...

HURRY, FRIENDS!

WELL,
THAT'S GOODBYE
TO TATROK!



THE COMMANDER OF THE ETARKAN RELIEF FORCE GASPED WITH SHOCK...

LOOK — IT'S OMARK!

AND THE EARTHMEN! THEY'RE SAFE!



WITHIN MINUTES, BILL AND PETE ARRIVED IN ETARKA!

IT — IT'S INCREDIBLE! AND IF TATROK HAD HAD HIS WAY ALL THIS WOULD HAVE BEEN DESTROYED!



LATER, THE PALS WERE INTRODUCED TO KULUK...

WE OWE OUR LIVES TO YOU, SIR! THANK YOU!

YOU ARE MOST WELCOME HERE, EARTHMEN!



LET ME TELL YOU ABOUT THE SKELETON YOU FOUND! IT WAS THE REMAINS OF A CREW-MEMBER FROM THE FIRST EARTH EXPEDITION MANY YEARS AGO, BEFORE YOU WERE EVEN BORN! HE FELL INTO TATROK'S HANDS BEFORE WE COULD SAVE HIM! BUT LUCKILY WE WERE IN TIME ON THIS OCCASION!



BILL AND PETE STAYED WITH KULUK FOR SEVERAL WEEKS, EXPLORING THE DESOLATE SURFACE OF MIRKA, AND WHEN THEY FINALLY TOOK OFF FOR THE DISTANT EARTH...

WELL, AT LEAST WE HELPED TO SAVE ETARKA FROM DESTRUCTION, BILL!

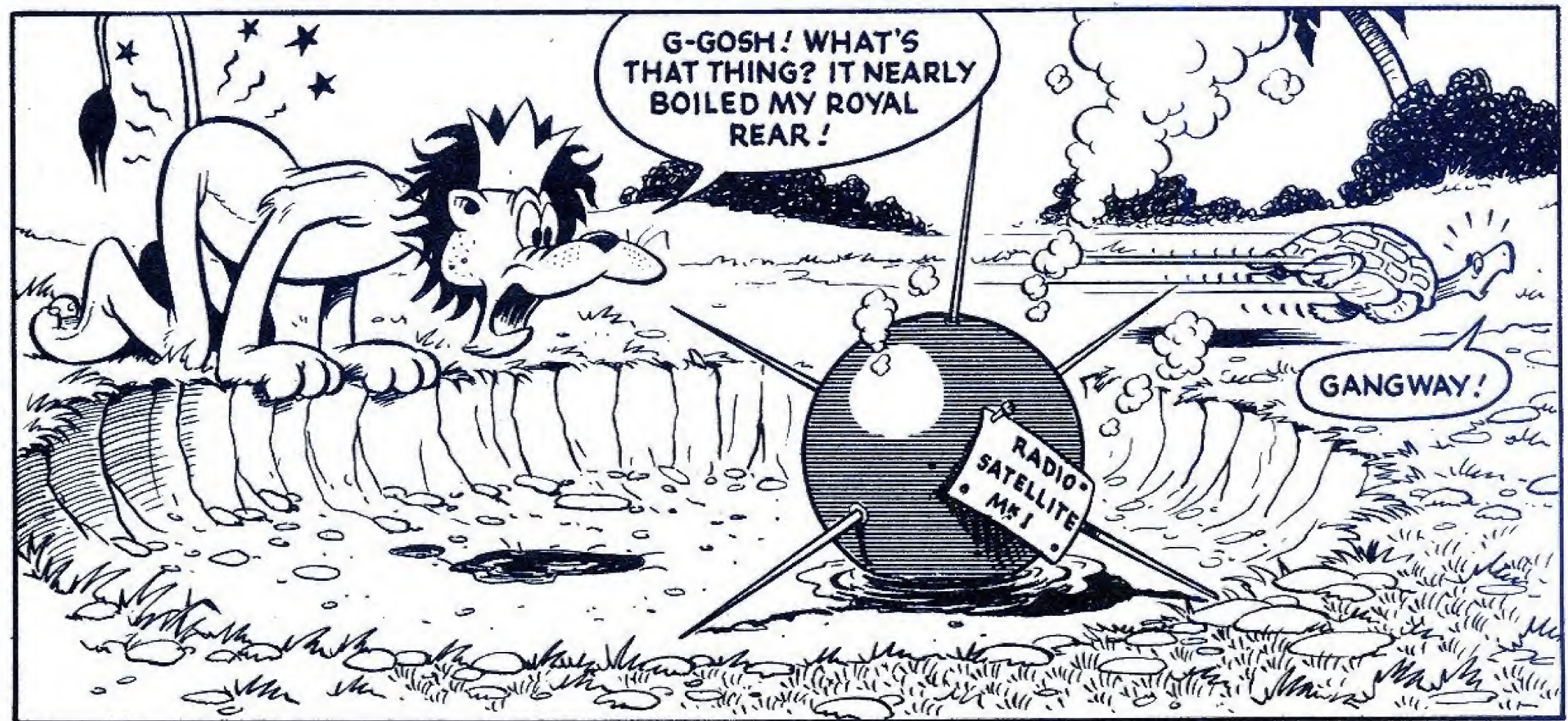
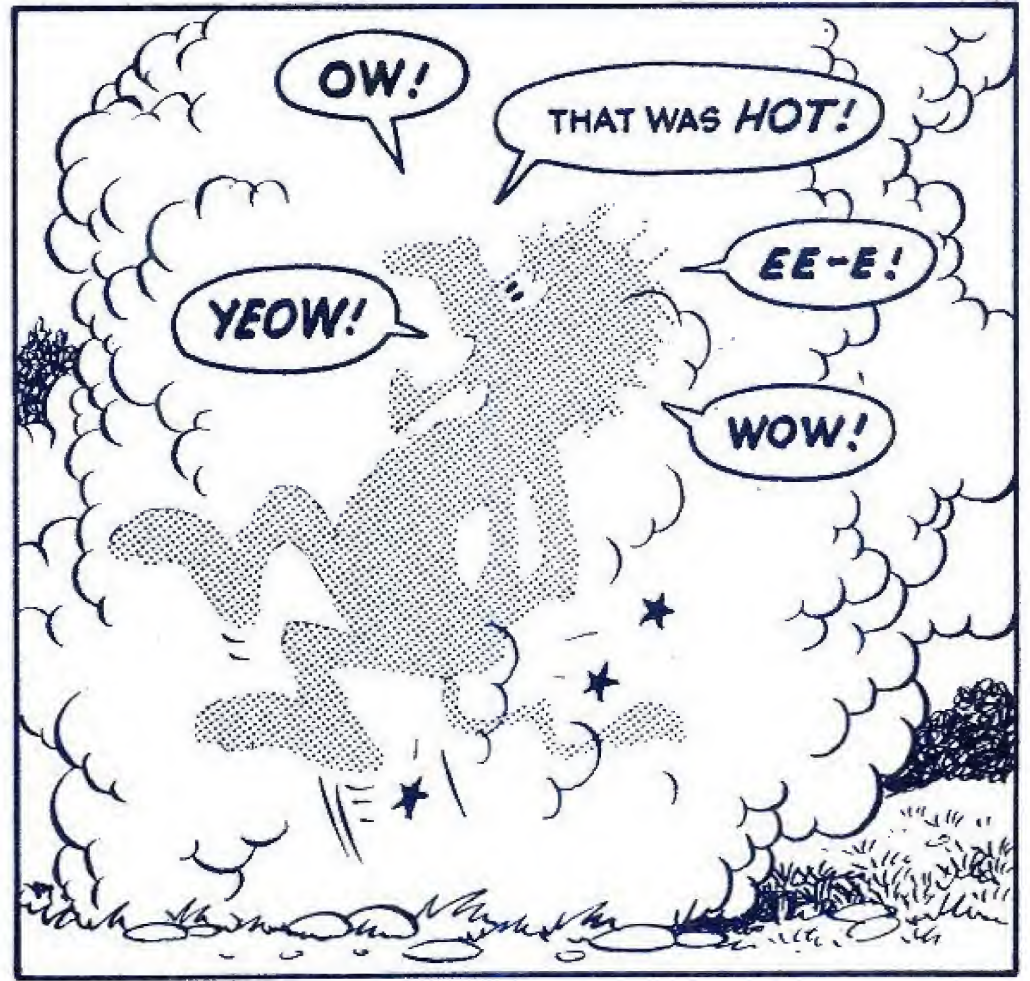
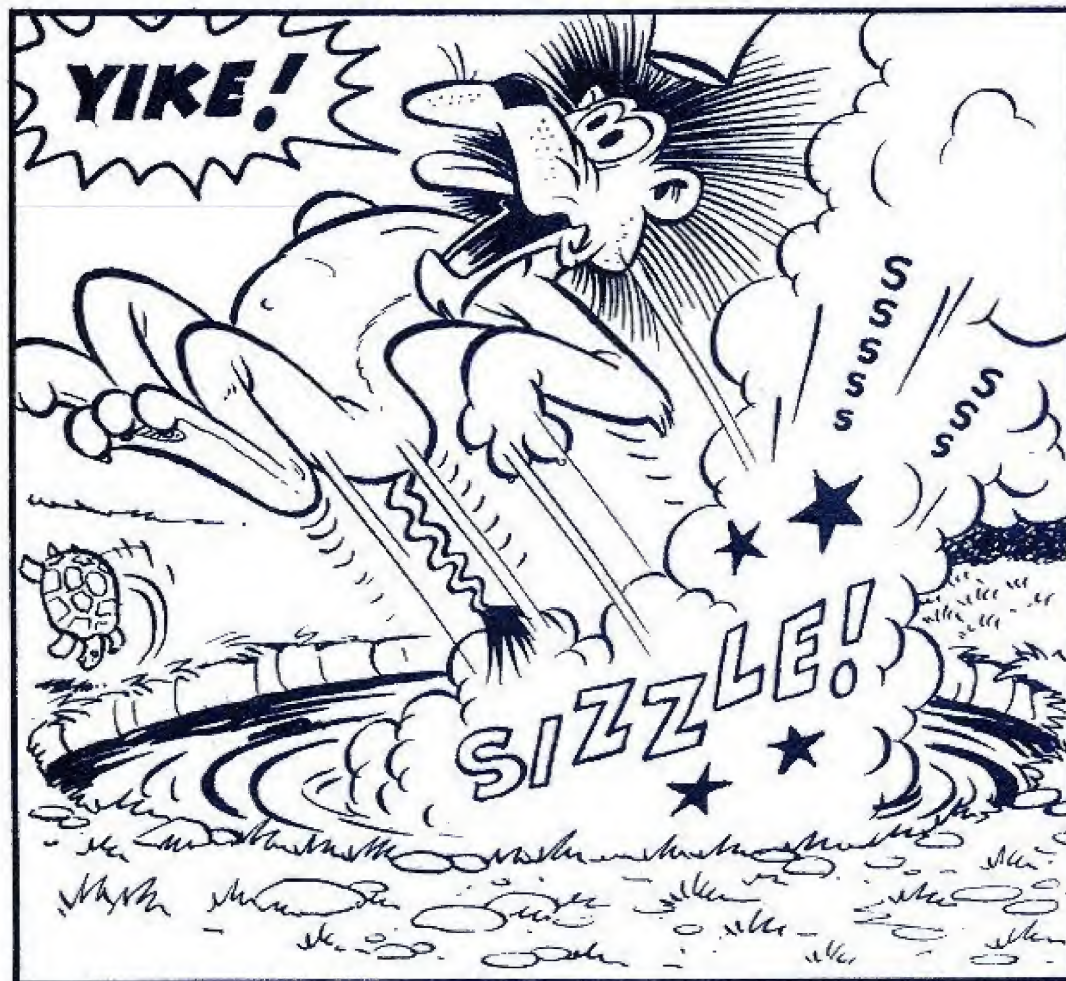
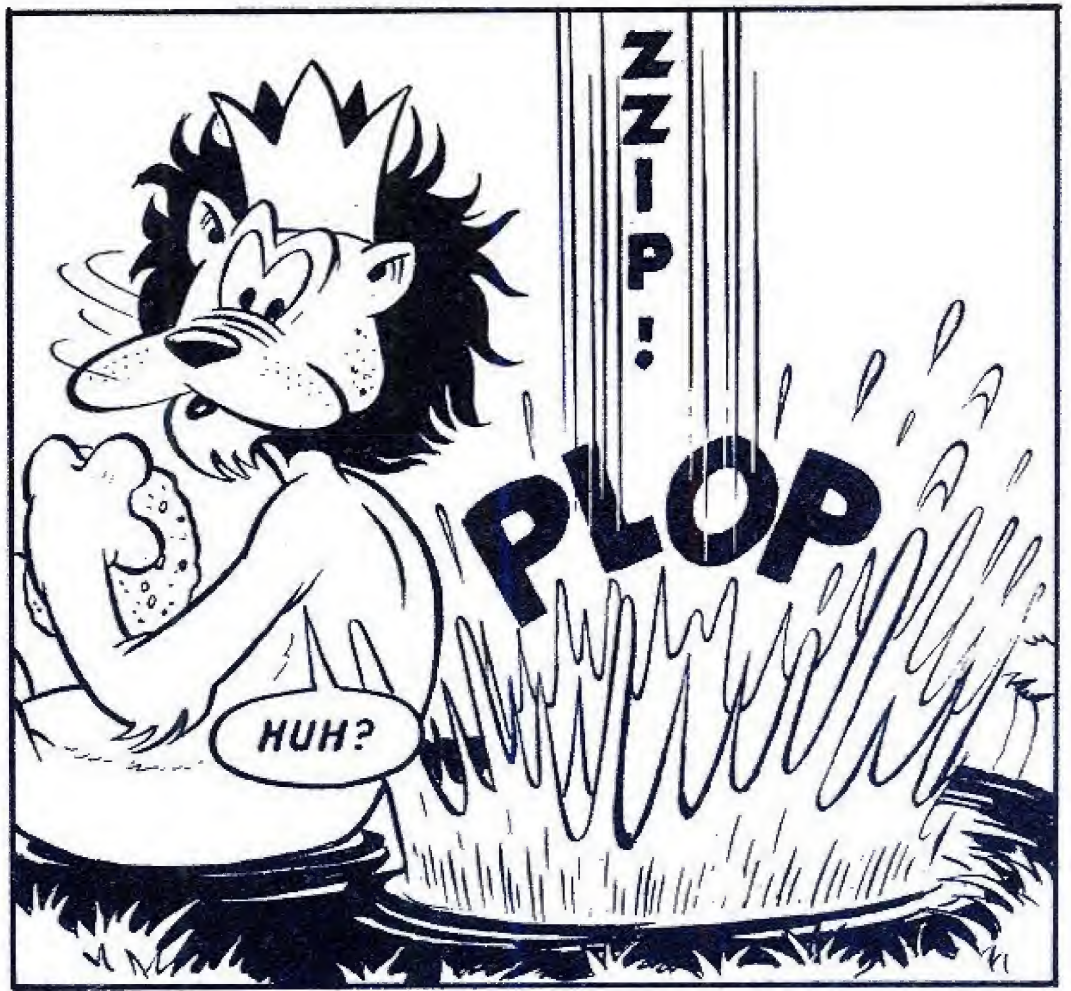


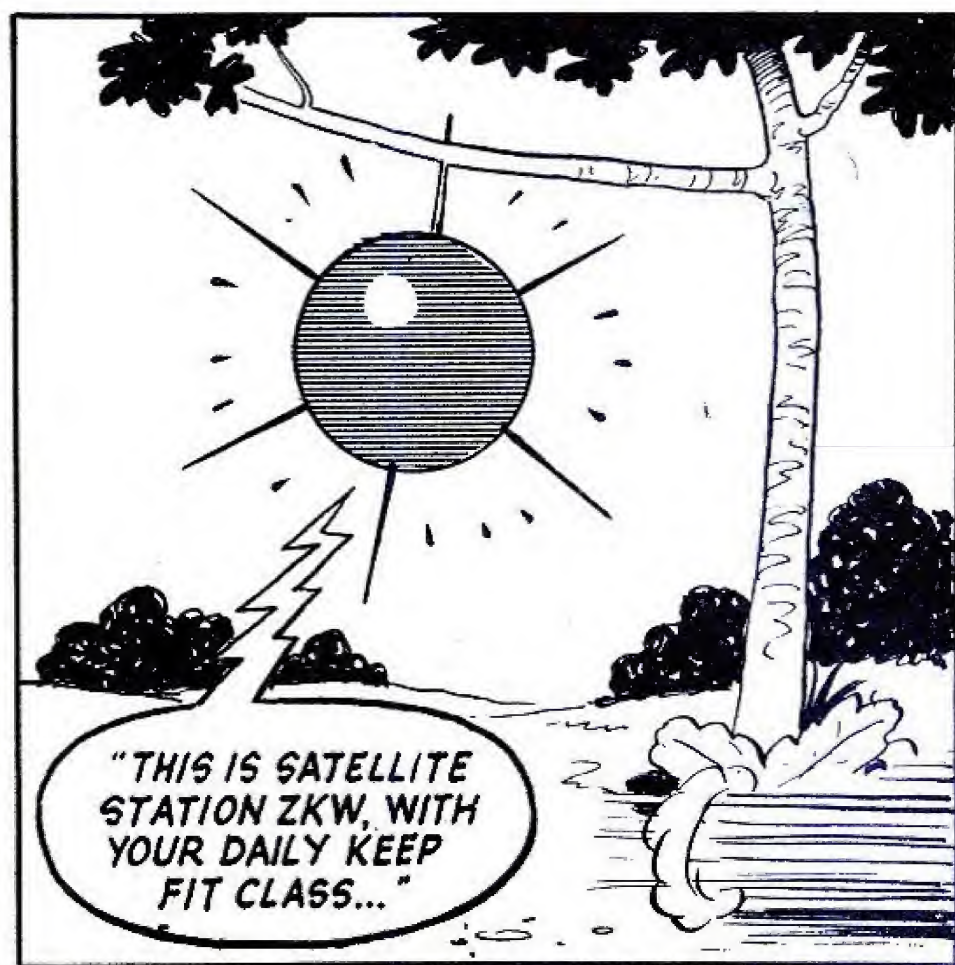
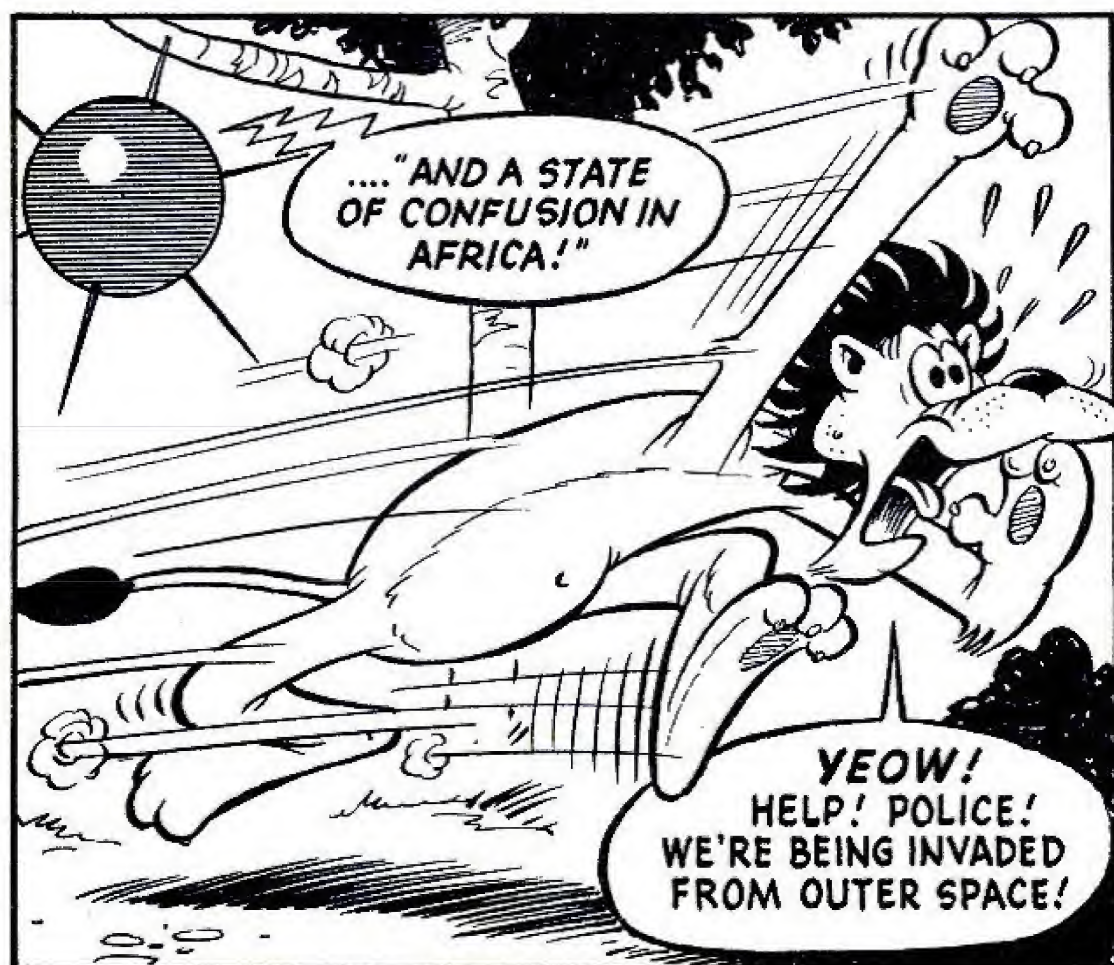
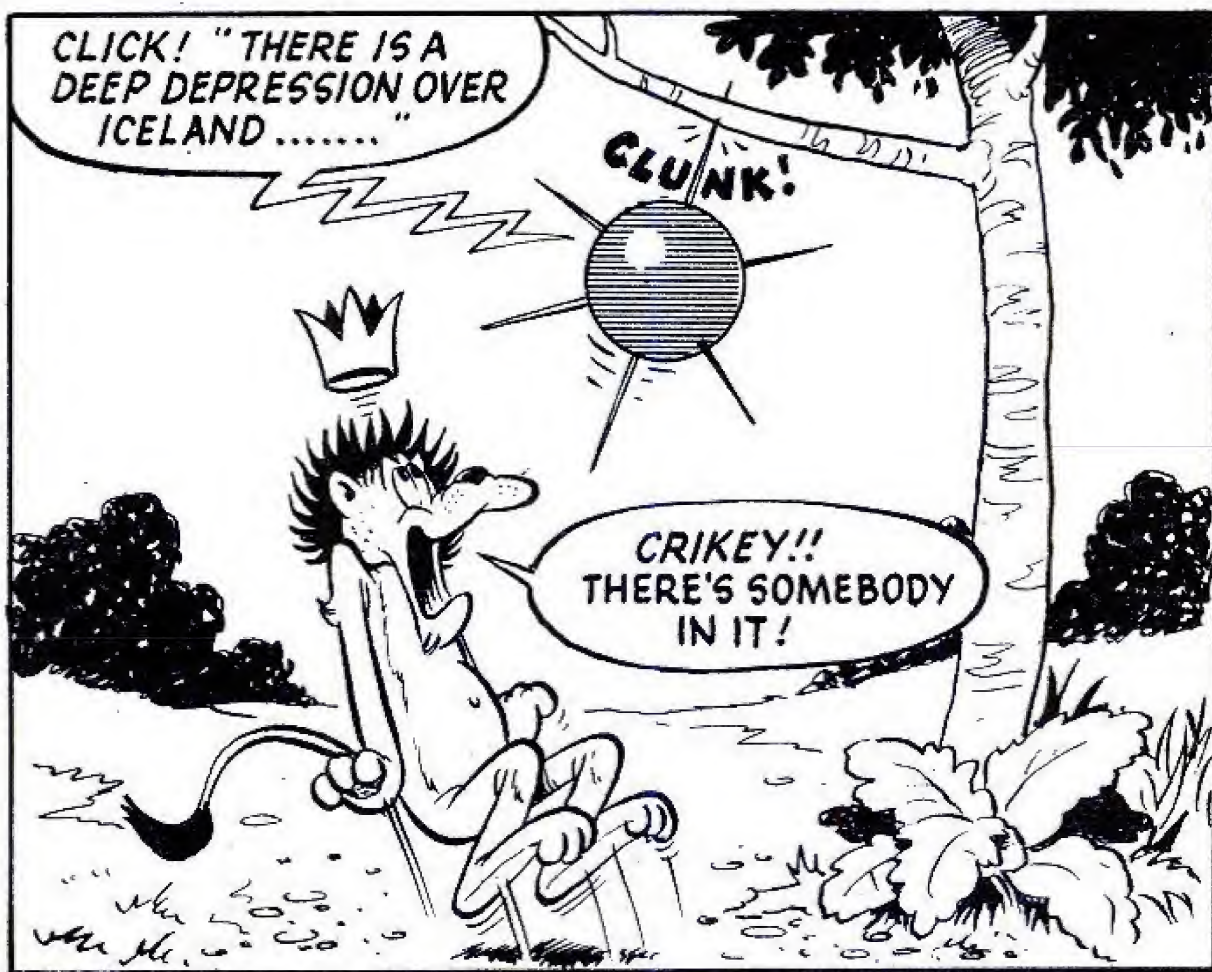
YES, AND WE'VE MADE A GOOD ALLY FOR THE FUTURE... KULUK — THE FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE MIRKAN REPUBLIC!

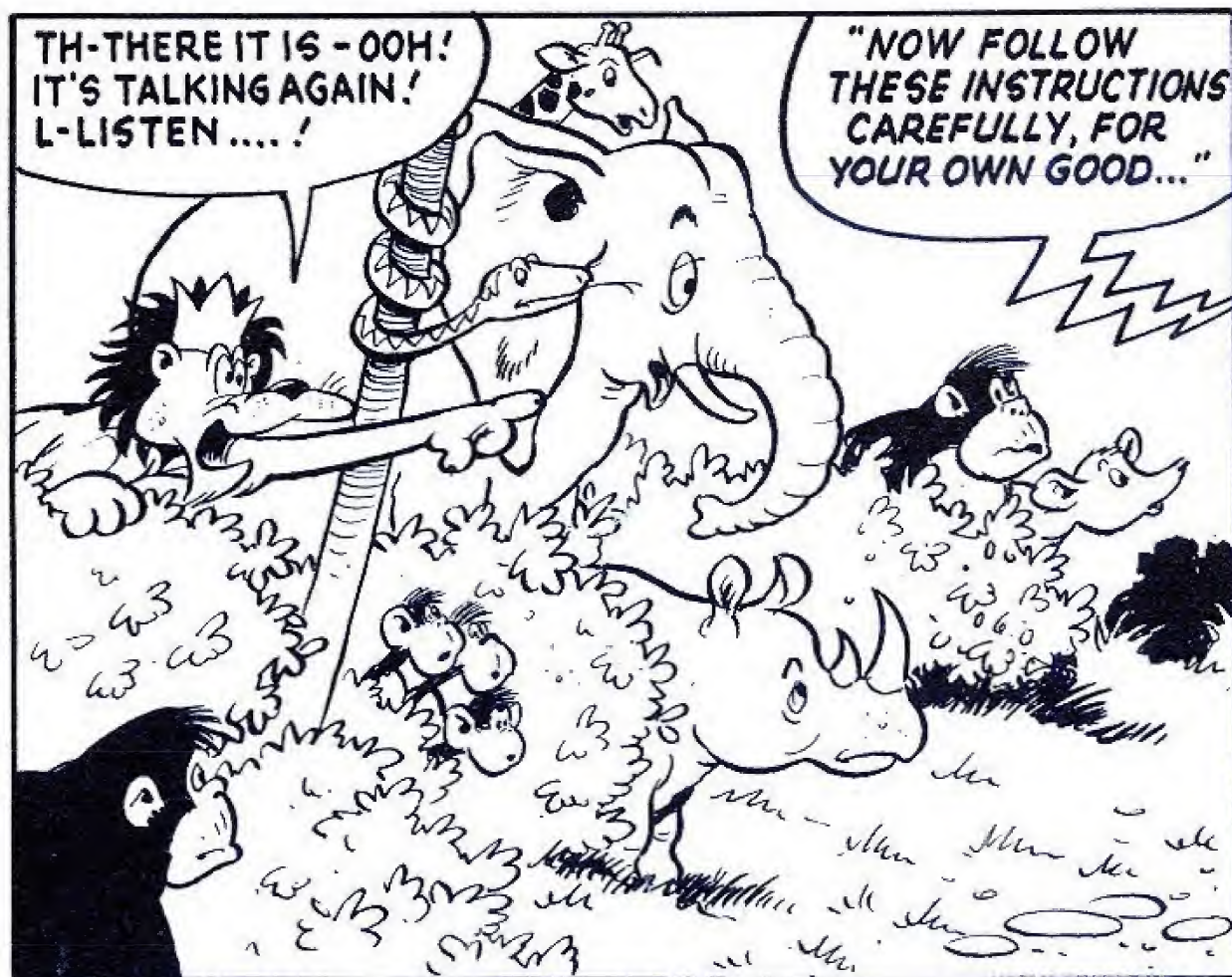
THE END

TATTY-MANE

KING OF THE JUNGLE





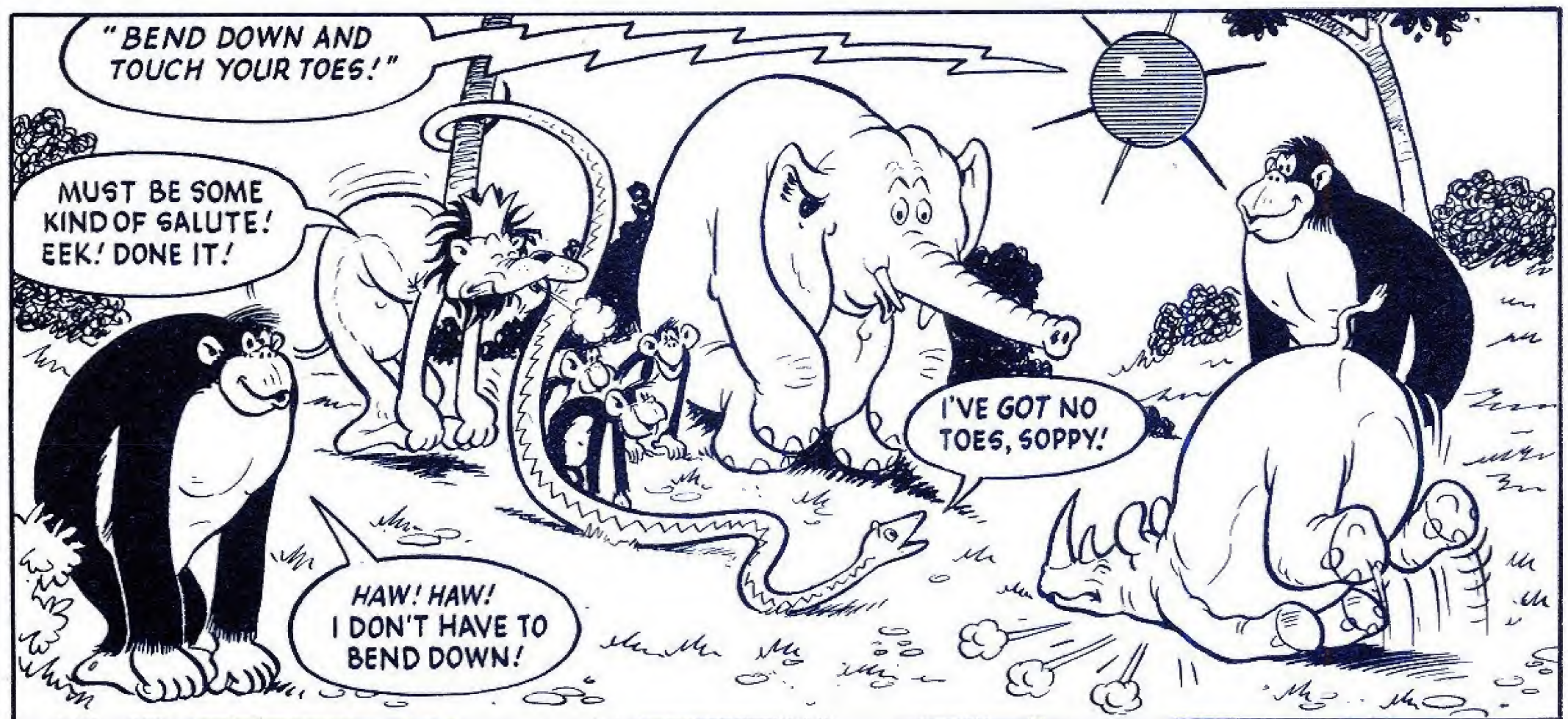


TH-THERE IT IS - OOH!
IT'S TALKING AGAIN!
L-LISTEN!

"NOW FOLLOW
THESE INSTRUCTIONS
CAREFULLY, FOR
YOUR OWN GOOD..."



ER.. GULP! HO-HO! I THINK
WE HAD B-BETTER HUMOUR
IT, YOU CHAP6. L-LET'S
DO AS IT SAYS!



"BEND DOWN AND
TOUCH YOUR TOES!"

MUST BE SOME
KIND OF SALUTE!
EEK! DONE IT!

I'VE GOT NO
TOES, SOPPY!

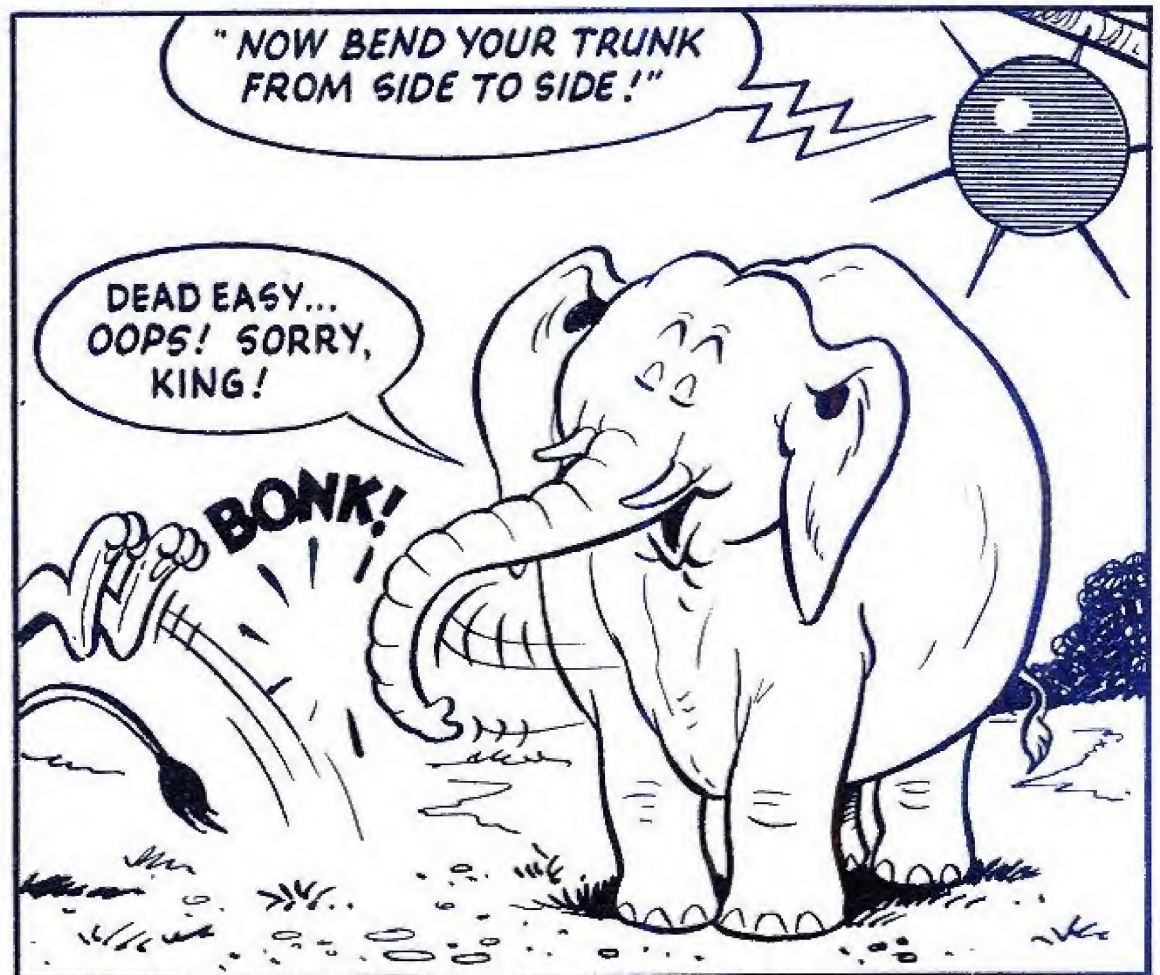
HAW! HAW!
I DON'T HAVE TO
BEND DOWN!



"NOW LIE FACE DOWN
AND DO TWENTY PRESS-UPS!"

... EIGHTEEN...
NINETEEN... TWENTY!
EASY!

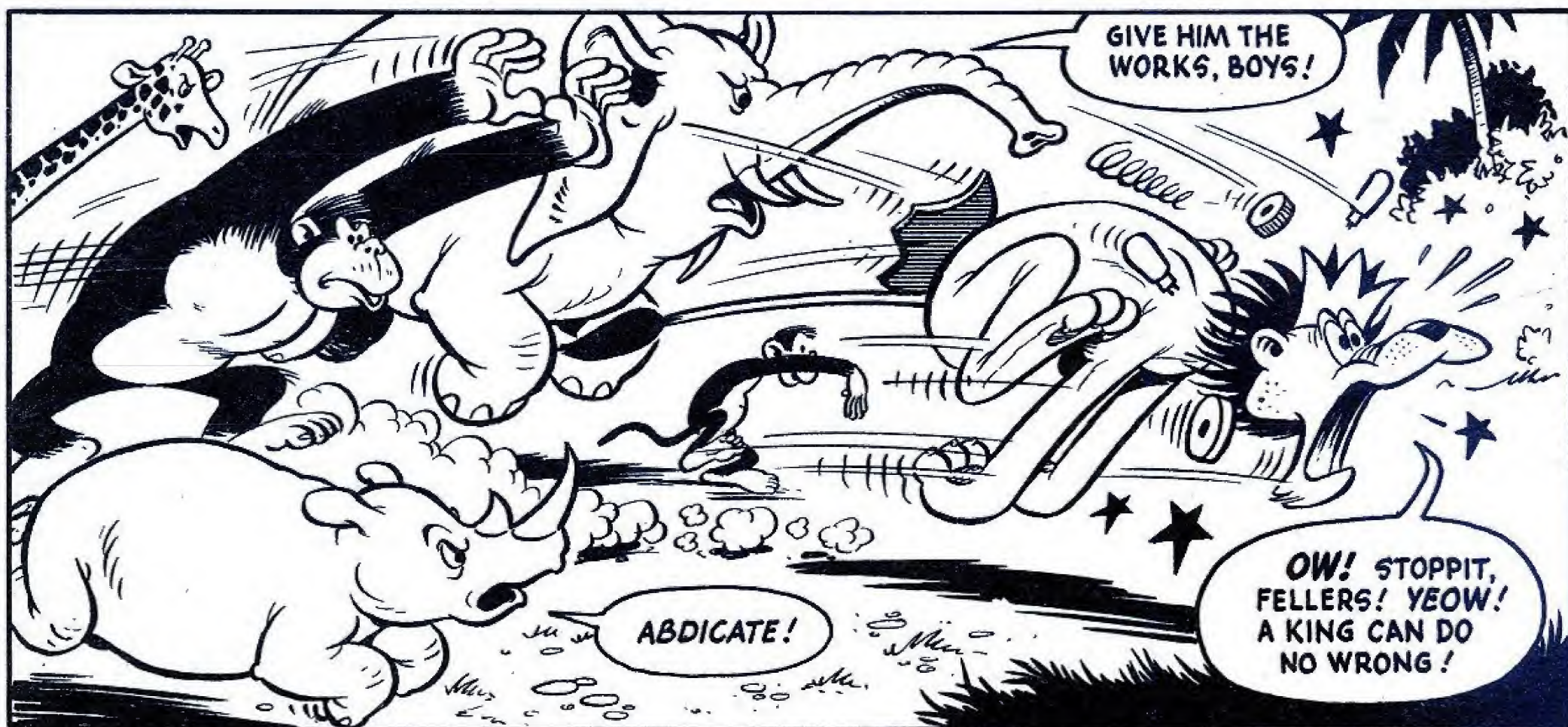
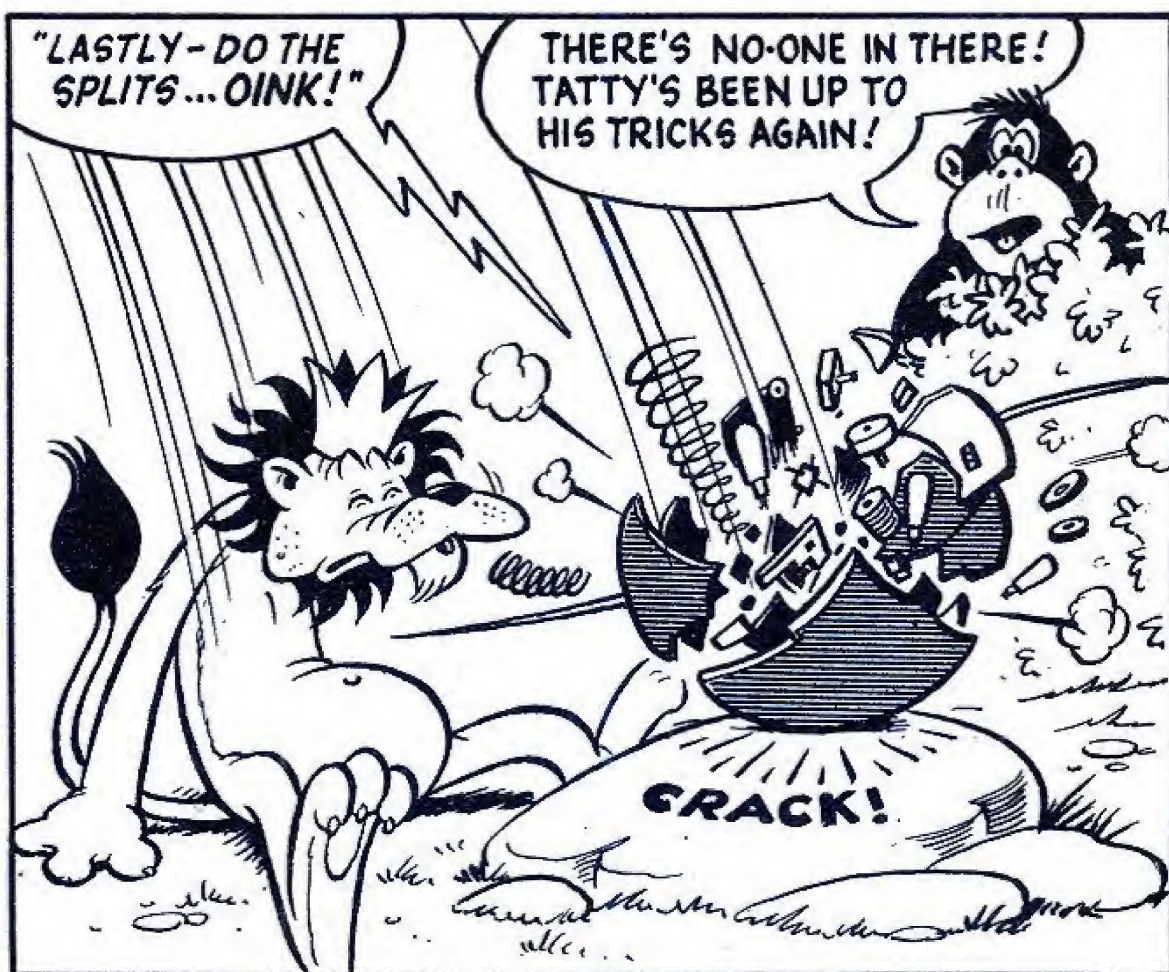
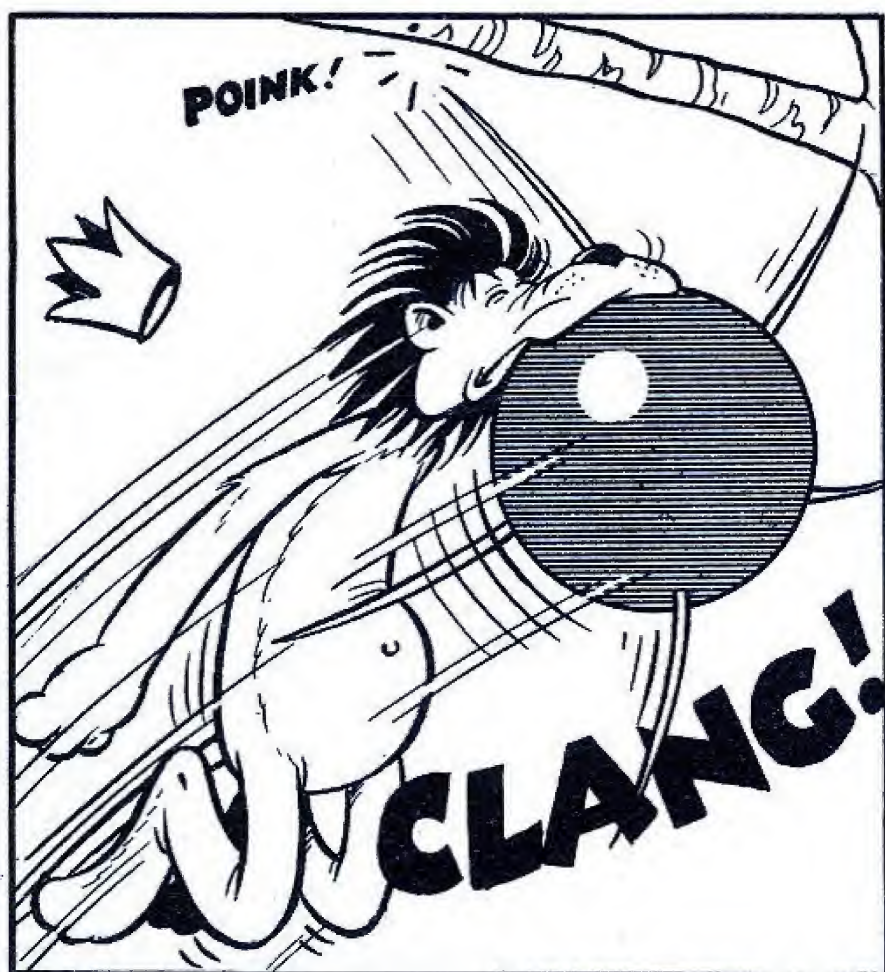
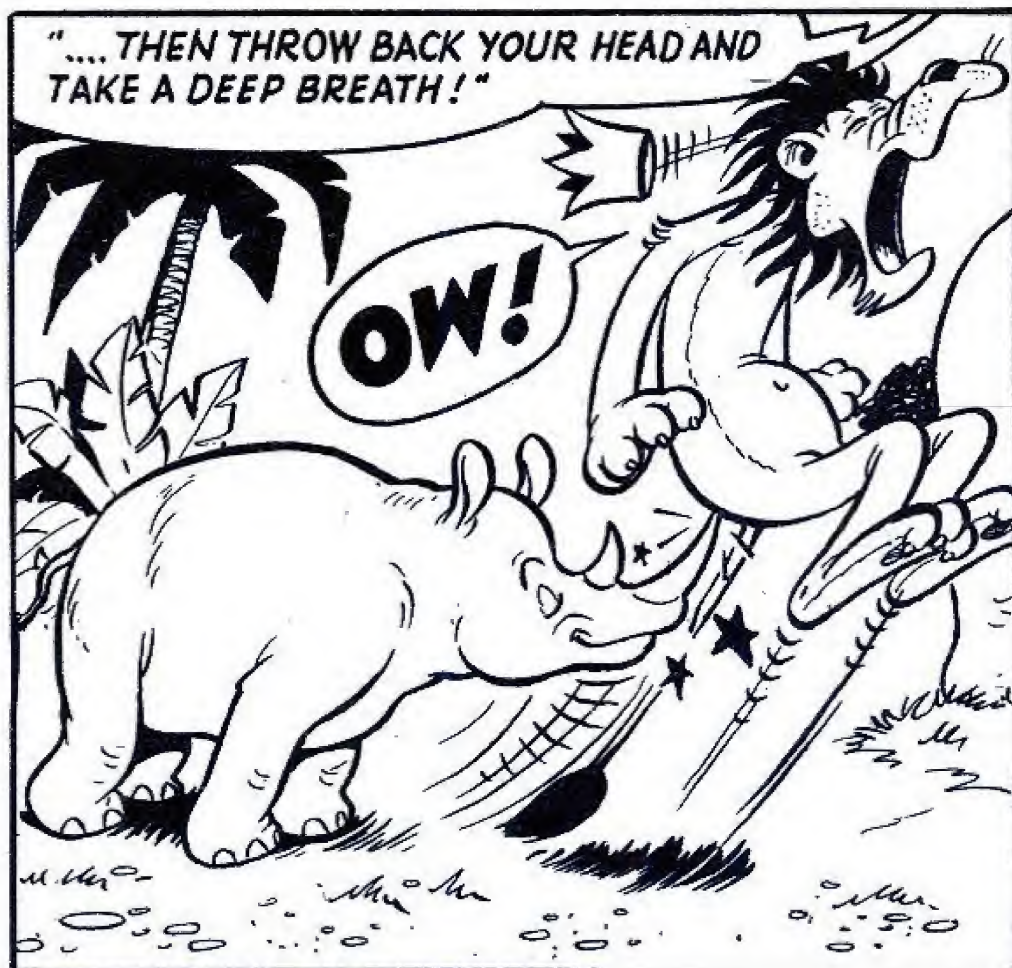
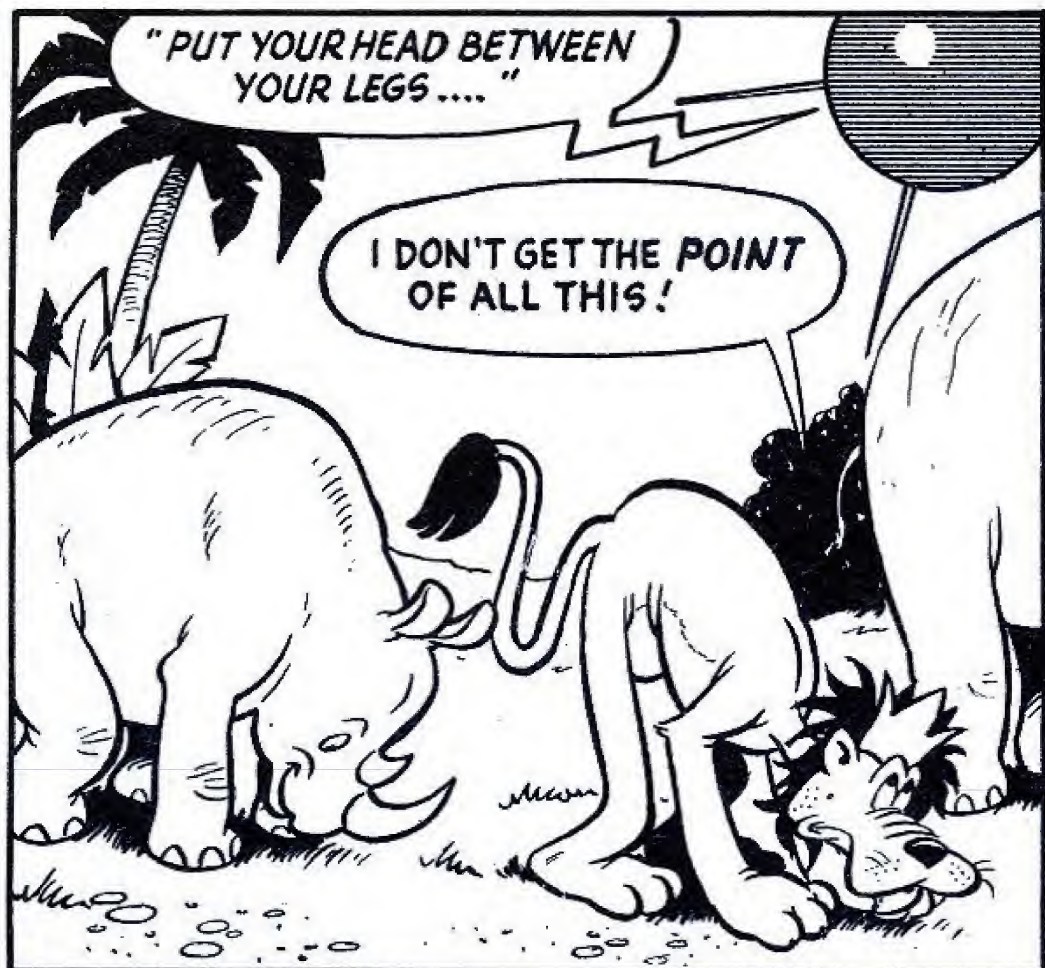
ONE TWO-O OOOF!



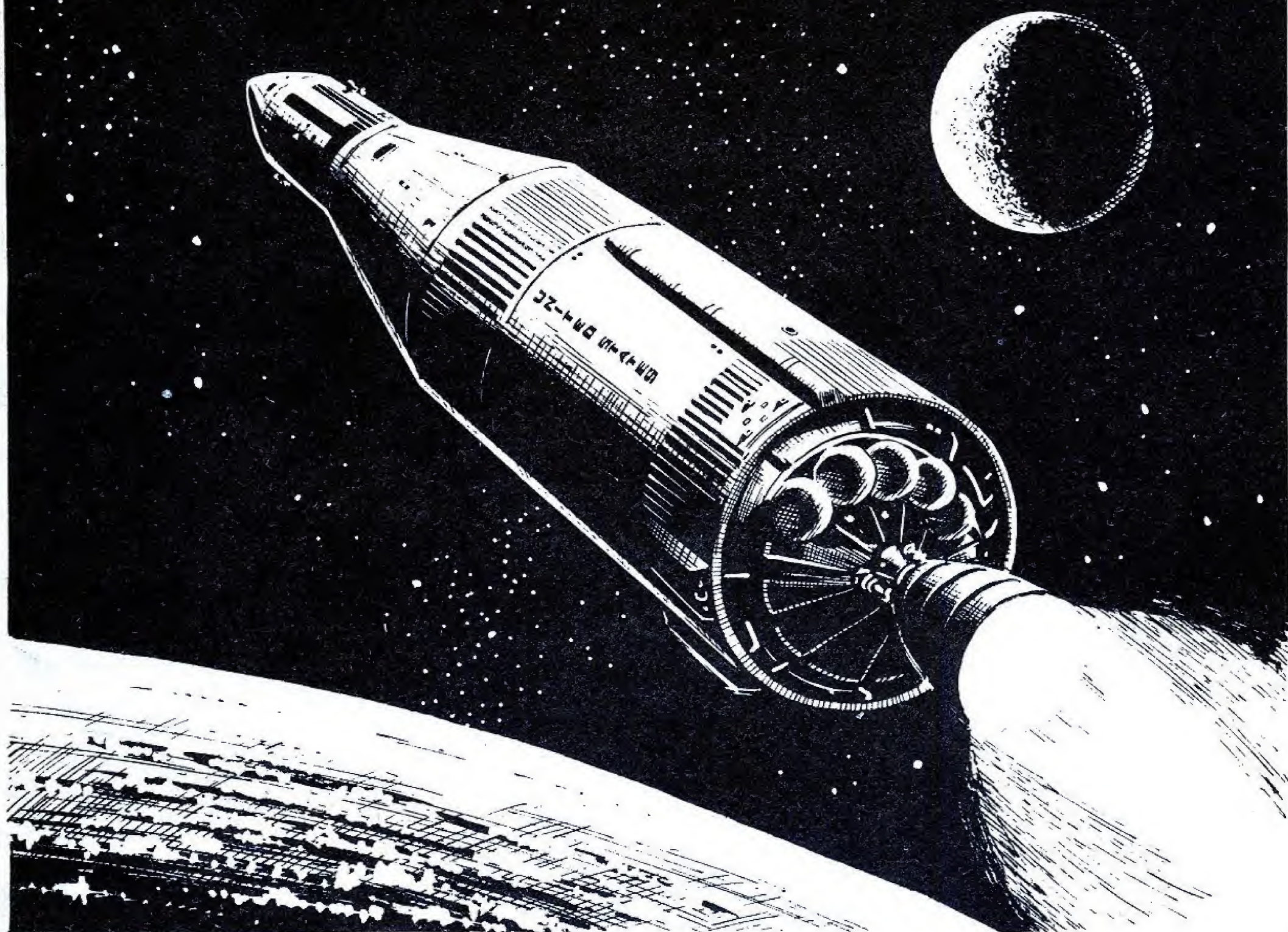
"NOW BEND YOUR TRUNK
FROM SIDE TO SIDE!"

DEAD EASY...
OOPS! SORRY,
KING!

BONK!



TO THE MOON—AND BACK!



ZERO HOUR for Project "Apollo"—and the vast bulk of the Saturn V booster rocket stands steaming on the launching pad at Cape Kennedy, awaiting the firing signal for the most ambitious plan ever attempted in the history of Mankind—sending men to the Moon, landing them there, taking them off again, and getting them back to Earth.

The immense three-stage rocket towers 360 feet into the air, dwarfing anything ever before seen on a rocket launching pad. And on top of the rocket is the Apollo spacecraft which consists of three sections, and in its Command Section, or Module, are three astronauts.

Blast-off! With all five engines of the first stage thundering out their titanic power, Saturn V slowly rises, perfectly balanced.

The first part of this project is to go into orbit round the Earth, and the mass which is being lifted into orbit by this giant rocket is

more than *eighty times* greater than the original Mercury capsule of previous years.

Minutes later, high above Earth, the first stage of Saturn V, its fuel exhausted, burns out and drops away. At the same instant stage two blasts forth. The mighty rocket accelerates on into its carefully calculated orbit.

At last, with stage two burnt-out, and gone, there is no more acceleration, the rocket motors are silent, and the Apollo spacecraft floats in orbit, still attached to stage three of the booster rocket.

Earth rolls past underneath at 18,000 miles an hour. The three astronauts relax, and consider what lies ahead of them.

They are in the Command Module, which is designed so that three men can work, eat and sleep in it without wearing pressure suits. It has windows, periscopes, and controls, with an airlock through which the crew, when in their pressure suits, can exit into space if necessary.

This is the only section of the great ship that will be returning to Earth at the end of the whole exploration. It weighs five tons.

Behind it is the Service Module, which weighs twenty-five tons, and carries the rockets and fuel for getting into and out of an orbit round the Moon. The actual thrust which will carry Apollo out of its Earth orbit, and launch it towards the Moon, is to be supplied by stage three of the original booster rocket, which is still linked up. The rest will be up to the Service Module.

And the third and last component of Apollo is the Lunar Excursion Module.

So the astronauts sail on, around Earth, in closed orbit. And during hours of crackling conversation with Earth Base, preparation is made for the true Moon-shot itself.

To get anywhere near the Moon at all from the vicinity of the planet Earth is a much more complex business than you might think. It's not just a case of aiming at the Moon, and firing off. For the Moon is itself in motion, and is circling the Earth in an orbit which is between 200,000 and 230,000 miles in radius. If Apollo were to be aimed at the Moon, by the time the spacecraft had travelled the 230,000 miles of intervening space, the Moon would have travelled quite a distance along its orbit, and would be somewhere else.

In fact, Apollo has to be aimed at the point in space where the Moon will be after Apollo has made its journey. This is the same thing as trying to get to a certain railway station at the same time as an express train stops there.

To estimate exactly where the Moon will be at any time is a very complex calculation, and is worked out on computers. So the astronauts will already know the correct firing-time, and the precise direction into space in which Apollo will be pointing.

Just before the new Zero Hour, Apollo is lined up carefully, by short bursts on the little servo-rockets of the Service Module. The astronauts strap themselves once again into their acceleration couches. The actual firing impulse will come from the Earth Base.

Wham! The single rocket-motor on stage three of the booster fires, with a 200,000 pounds thrust, and continues blasting until Apollo has reached a velocity of 25,000 miles per hour. Then it is switched off, and cast adrift. The Moon explorers are on their way.

But to these explorers, now floating in a state of 'free fall' inside the Command Module, they do not seem to be on a journey at all. There is nothing by which their eyes can judge any relative motion. The great curving mass of the Earth, a wondrous blue-green, is behind them, or above them, or below



The astronauts link the Lunar Excursion Module with the Command Module.

them, depending on which way up they decided to float in the capsule at any moment—for there is no gravity, as far as the explorers are concerned, and no sense of direction.

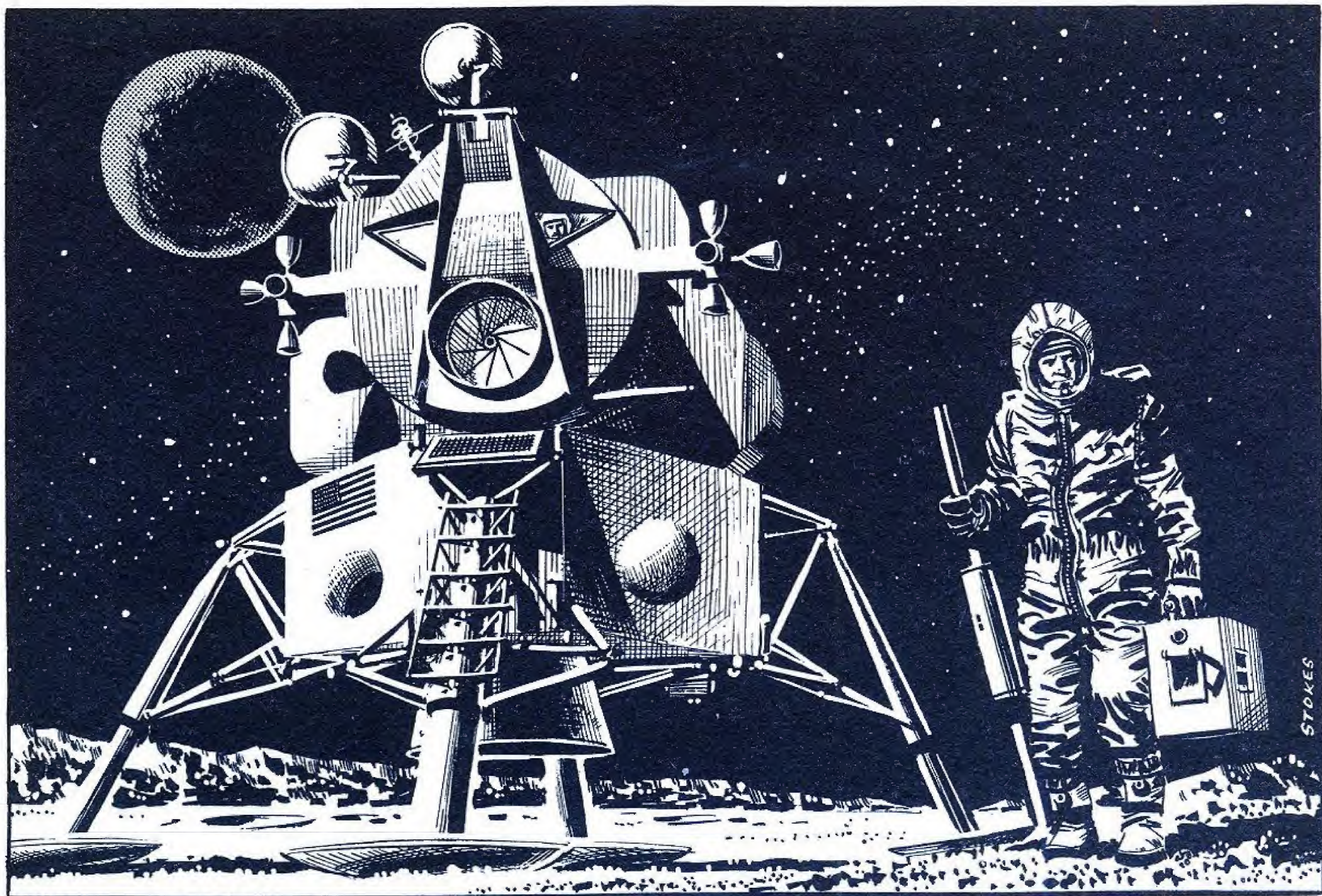
Everywhere around, they see a universe of stars, so thickly sown and brilliant that even a powerful searchlight shining at them from a mile away would be lost in the blaze of light.

Outside the spacecraft is a hard vacuum, in which no man could live for an instant without a strong and shielded pressure-suit. At one point in the sky is the blazing gas-ball of the Sun. Elsewhere floats the Moon, a blinding crescent of silvery light where it faces the Sun, and a black mass with a faint halo where it is in shadow.

This is like no journey ever made on Earth! But the computers have calculated that Apollo is on a sure course. And the astronauts are already experts in navigating by the strange new star-charts of the universe.

Their first task is to go outside the ship, and manoeuvre the Lunar Excursion Module round to the front of the Command Module, so that it is linked on, nose to nose.

Time passes. Slowly, their picture of the universe changes. The Moon, now immense, is looming near. Earth is far in the background,



After a safe landing, an Earthman walks on the Moon — for the first time in history !

a round, green-glowing ball. Ten hours have gone by since the stage three blast-off.

Apollo is turned round so that the rocket motor of the Service Module is facing the direction of travel. The Moon is now a great curving mass. They are still dead on course.

Wham ! The motor is fired. And in a few minutes, Apollo is coasting round the Moon on an orbit only one hundred miles up.

Two astronauts climb into the Lunar Excursion Module, and the third remains in the Command Module. The Lunar Excursion Module is unlinked from Apollo, and with a series of careful blasts of its rocket motor, it drops out of orbit towards the sunlit lunar surface. Apollo stays in orbit.

With its motor blasting, the Module slowly settles on to a great volcanic lunar plain.

Minutes later an Earthman steps out on to the Moon, for the first time in history !

In his pressure suit, he makes a gentle landing on both feet, his weight far less than on Earth. Low on the horizon, but always visible in the lunar sky, is the big, round, green-glowing ball which is the planet Earth, his home. And all around him is desolation—volcanic rock, pitted with meteorite holes, and on the skyline the bleak crags of some gigantic mountain range.

In his pressure suit, nothing stands between him and doom except the oxygen in his tanks.

For several hours the two astronauts move here and there on the Moon's surface, taking samples, photographs, making observations.

At a prearranged time, the Module again blasts off, and in a few minutes has joined up again with Apollo in orbit, and the two astronauts transfer back into the Command Module.

At an exact moment of time, with Apollo once again lined up in a precise direction, the astronauts fire a 22,000 pound rocket-motor in the Service Module. And Apollo is on the journey home to Earth, leaving behind the Lunar Excursion Module to orbit the Moon forever—or until some future exploration team arrives, perhaps even to use it again.

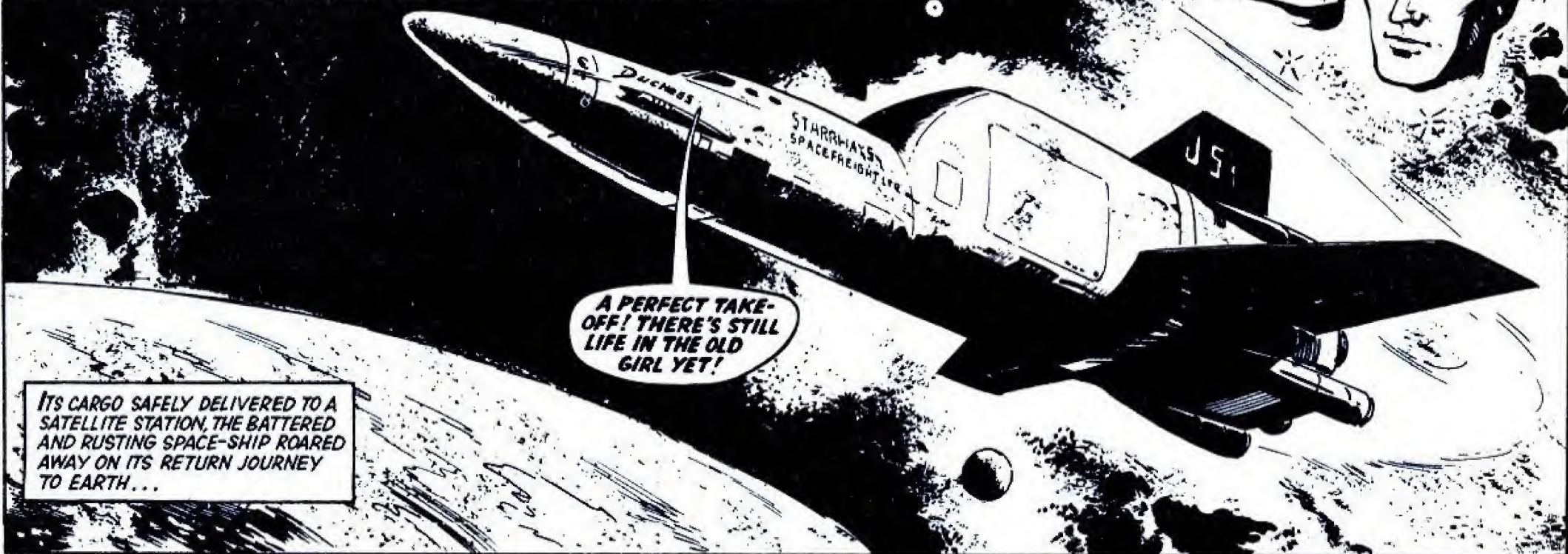
Twelve hours or so later, Apollo is hurtling into Earth's atmosphere along a precise flight path called 'the entry corridor.'

At this point, the Service Module with its rockets, having done all its work, is jettisoned, and will burn up in the air.

The Command Module, all that is left of Apollo, uses a drogue parachute, and then main chutes to slow its descent. Minutes later, having decelerated from the velocity of 25,000 miles an hour, it comes down gently into the sea.

The Moon explorers are home again.

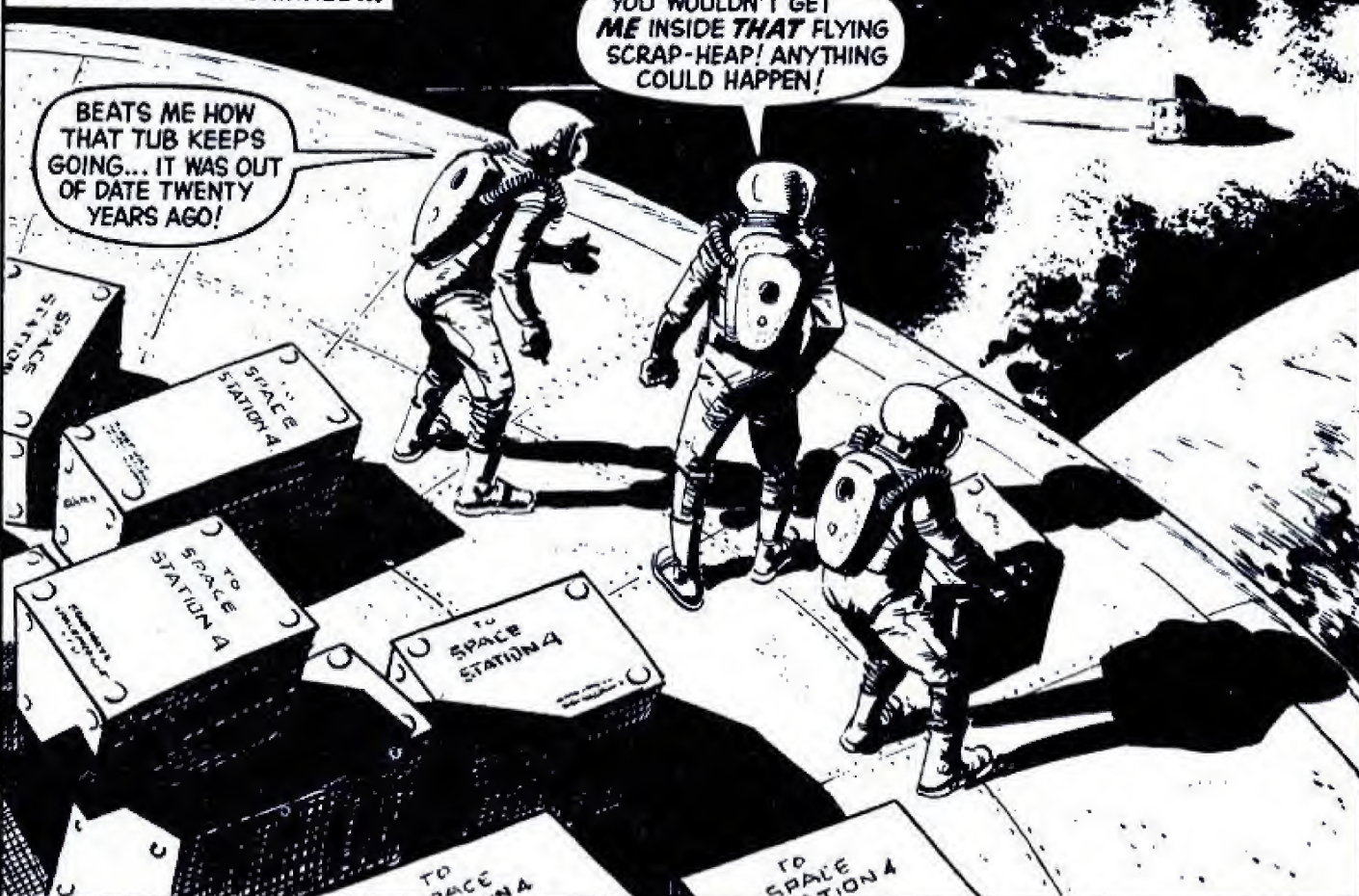
THE SPACE FREIGHTIERS



ITS CARGO SAFELY DELIVERED TO A SATELLITE STATION, THE BATTERED AND RUSTING SPACE-SHIP ROARED AWAY ON ITS RETURN JOURNEY TO EARTH...

A PERFECT TAKE-OFF! THERE'S STILL LIFE IN THE OLD GIRL YET!

THE SATELLITE CREW SHOOK THEIR HEADS AND GRINNED...



YOU WOULDN'T GET ME INSIDE THAT FLYING SCRAP-HEAP! ANYTHING COULD HAPPEN!

BEATS ME HOW THAT TUB KEEPS GOING... IT WAS OUT OF DATE TWENTY YEARS AGO!

AT THAT VERY MOMENT, JOHNNY STARR, SKIPPER OF THE OLD SPACE-FREIGHTER, WAS HAVING TROUBLE...



SHE'S PLAYING UP AGAIN! DO SOMETHING!

AT LAST THEY REACHED LONDON...



SURE AND WE CAN DO WITH IT, JOHNNY!

WITH LUCK, WE MAY FIND SOME MORE BUSINESS WAITING FOR US, BLAST-OFF!



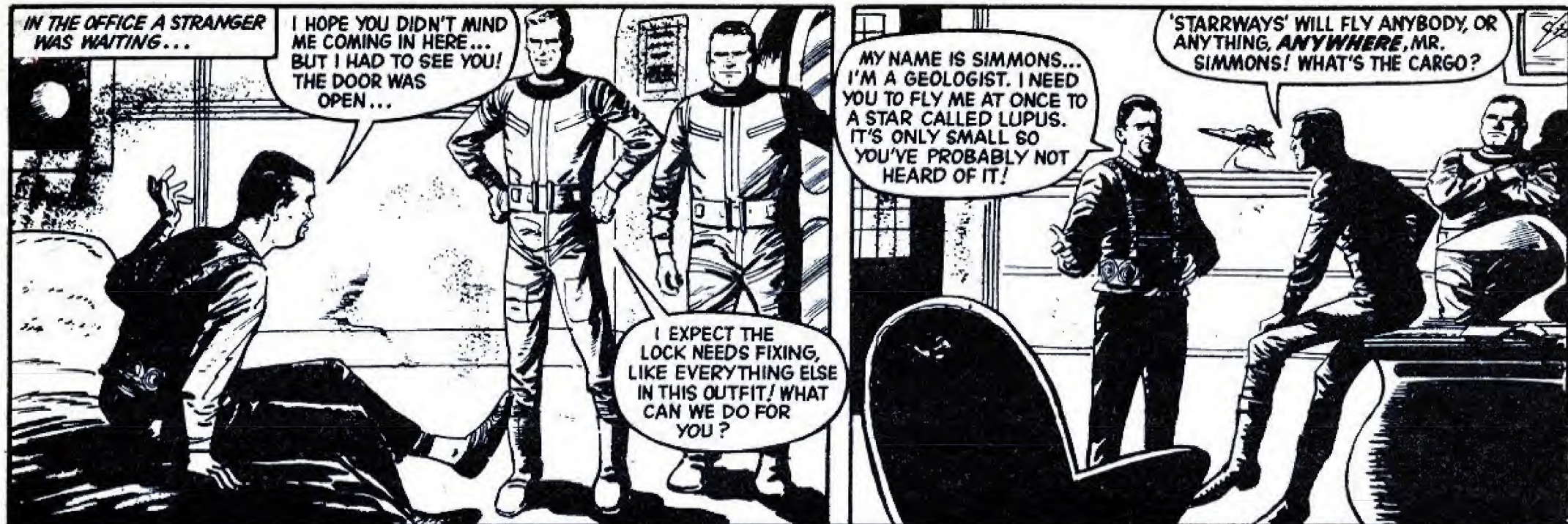
'BLAST-OFF' BROGAN, JOHNNY'S BUSINESS PARTNER AND MECHANIC, SWUNG A MASSIVE FIST...

IT'S THE STEERAGE CIRCUIT AGAIN, BEGORRA! ONLY ONE WAY TO FIX THAT...!



YOU SEE, SKIPPER? PURRING AS SWEET AS A CARGO OF KITTENS NOW! ALL SHE NEEDED WAS THE TOUCH OF A BORN MECHANIC!

WHAT'S NEEDED IS A NEW SPACE-SHIP... AND ENOUGH MONEY TO BUY ONE!



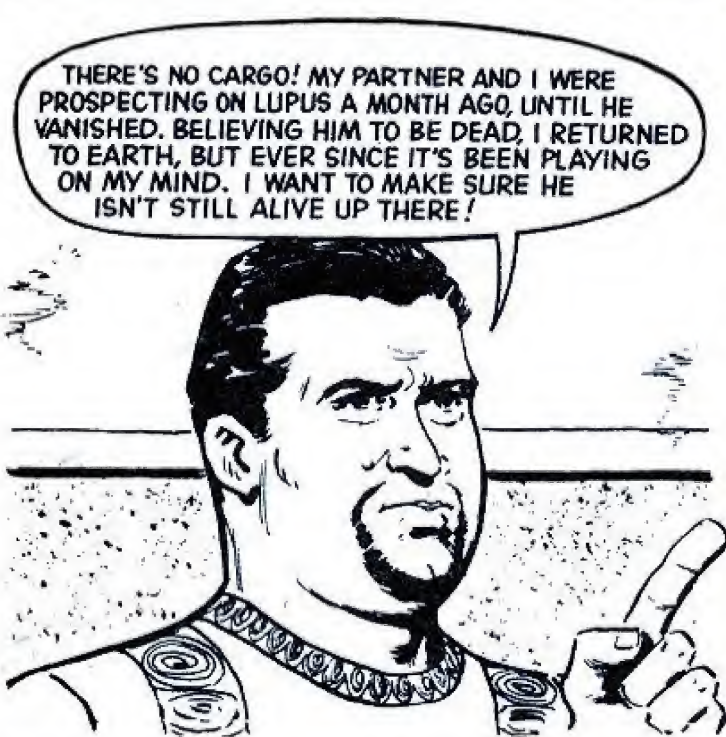
IN THE OFFICE A STRANGER WAS WAITING...

I HOPE YOU DIDN'T MIND ME COMING IN HERE... BUT I HAD TO SEE YOU! THE DOOR WAS OPEN...

MY NAME IS SIMMONS... I'M A GEOLOGIST. I NEED YOU TO FLY ME AT ONCE TO A STAR CALLED LUPUS. IT'S ONLY SMALL SO YOU'VE PROBABLY NOT HEARD OF IT!

'STARRWAYS' WILL FLY ANYBODY, OR ANYTHING, ANYWHERE, MR. SIMMONS! WHAT'S THE CARGO?

I EXPECT THE LOCK NEEDS FIXING, LIKE EVERYTHING ELSE IN THIS OUTFIT! WHAT CAN WE DO FOR YOU?



THERE'S NO CARGO! MY PARTNER AND I WERE PROSPECTING ON LUPUS A MONTH AGO, UNTIL HE VANISHED. BELIEVING HIM TO BE DEAD, I RETURNED TO EARTH, BUT EVER SINCE IT'S BEEN PLAYING ON MY MIND. I WANT TO MAKE SURE HE ISN'T STILL ALIVE UP THERE!

THIS WASN'T BY ANY MEANS THE STRANGEST JOB JOHNNY AND BLAST-OFF HAD DONE... SO THE PALS READILY AGREED!

AS MY OWN SPACE-SHIP IS BEING OVERHAULED AND I SHALL NEED HELP TO FIND HIM...

SAY NO MORE, MR. SIMMONS! GIVE US TWO HOURS TO LOAD *THE DUCHESS* WITH FUEL AND SUPPLIES AND WE'LL BE ON OUR WAY!

AND SO, FOR THE SECOND TIME THAT DAY, *THE DUCHESS* TOOK TO THE AIR...

LUPUS IS REALLY ONLY A FRAGMENT FROM A LARGE PLANET MUCH FARTHER AWAY. MY PARTNER AND I WERE THE FIRST HUMANS TO LAND ON IT!

SO IT'S VIRTUALLY UNEXPLORED, EH? SOUNDS INTERESTING!



AT LAST...

THERE IT IS, MR. STARR! THAT'S LUPUS!

RIGHT! NOW LET'S SEE IF I CAN COAX *THE DUCHESS* INTO A SMOOTH LANDING!



FAITH, AND I'VE SEEN MORE CHEERFUL-LOOKING PLACES THAN THIS, SO I HAVE!



WHERE DO WE START LOOKING FOR YOUR FRIEND?

I RECOGNISE THAT GORGE OVER THERE... I'M SURE MY PARTNER AND I WENT THAT WAY!

SIMMONS LICKED HIS LIPS NERVOUSLY...

I... I DIDN'T WANT TO WARN YOU BEFORE, IN CASE YOU REFUSED TO BRING ME HERE—BUT ON LUPUS THERE ARE LARGE AND FEROCIOUS ANIMALS! WE CALLED THEM... *KRALEDs*!

BY THE BEARD OF BLARNEY HIMSELF! NOW HE TELLS US!



THEY ENTERED THE GORGE...

LISTEN! DID YOU HEAR SOMETHING?

ONLY ME KNEES KNOCKING! BEGORRA, BUT I DON'T LIKE THIS PLACE AT ALL!



THEN JOHNNY STARR HEARD THE SLITHERING SOUND AGAIN AND...

LOOK OUT, BLAST-OFF! ABOVE YOU!



HIS ROCKET-PISTOL FLAMED—JUST IN TIME!



BEJABERS, IF THAT'S A KRALED I DON'T BLAME YOU FOR NOT TELLING US ABOUT THEM! I'D NEVER HAVE COME NEAR THIS PLACE!

OH, NO! LOOK!

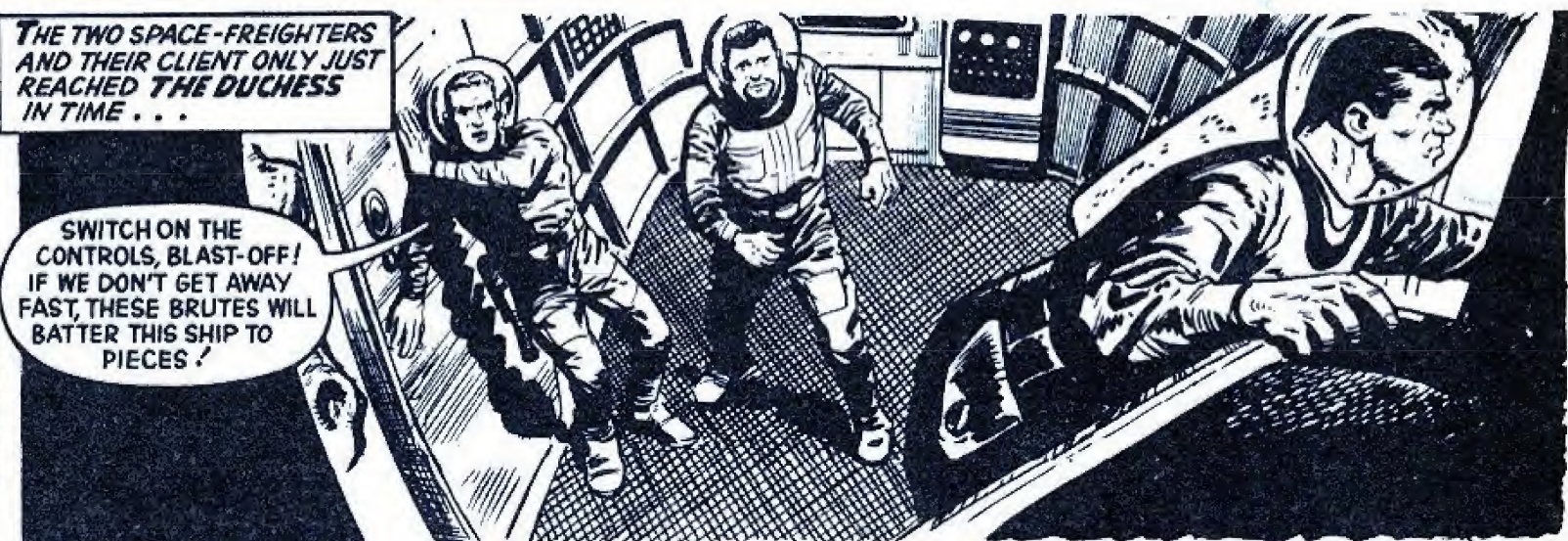


DOZENS OF THEM! TOO MANY FOR US TO SHOOT DOWN! BACK TO THE DUCHESS QUICKLY!

SURE, AND I DON'T NEED TO BE TOLD TWICE! COME ON!



SORRY, SIMMONS, BUT THIS IS ONE JOB WE CAN'T HANDLE! WE'RE LEAVING LUPUS RIGHT NOW!



THE TWO SPACE-FREIGHTERS AND THEIR CLIENT ONLY JUST REACHED THE DUCHESS IN TIME...

SWITCH ON THE CONTROLS, BLAST-OFF! IF WE DON'T GET AWAY FAST, THESE BRUTES WILL BATTER THIS SHIP TO PIECES!



JOHNNY STARR THREW HIMSELF INTO THE PILOT'S SEAT, BUT...

THE LAUNCHING-ROCKETS WON'T FIRE! NOTHING'S HAPPENING!

DON'T TELL ME SHE'S UP TO HER TRICKS AGAIN! NOT NOW!



THEY... THEY'RE SMASHING THEIR WAY THROUGH!

YOU TEMPERAMENTAL OLD JUNK-HEAP! AND AFTER ALL THE LOVING CARE I'VE GIVEN YOU... YOU DO THIS TO ME!

AS IF IN OUTRAGED ANGER AT BLAST-OFF'S MAMMOTH KICK, THE DUCHESS GAVE A THUNDEROUS REPLY!



THE WHOLE LAUNCHING-GEAR HAS BLOWN UP! WE'VE HAD IT!

THEN BLAST-OFF GAVE A ROAR OF DELIGHT...

SHE'S BLOWN UP HER LAUNCHING-GEAR ALL RIGHT, JOHNNY... BUT SHE'S BLOWN UP THEM KRALED AS WELL!



JOHNNY FOLLOWED THE GEOLOGIST THROUGH THE GORGE, THEN UP THE SIDE OF A JAGGED PEAK...



IT'LL TAKE ME A COUPLE OF HOURS AT LEAST TO REPAIR THIS LITTLE LOT!

YOU HEAR THAT, SIMMONS? THERE'S A GOOD CHANCE WE'VE SEEN THE LAST OF THOSE KRALED, SO WHILE BLAST-OFF GETS TO WORK WE'LL START LOOKING FOR YOUR PARTNER!



WE CLIMBED THIS MOUNTAIN, STARR... THIS IS THE WAY WE WENT!

SOMEHOW, JOHNNY GRABBED A FLAILING HAND...



SOMEONE'S SHOOTING AT US! GET BACK AGAINST THE WALL!

BUT AS SIMMONS REACHED FOR ANOTHER HANDHOLD, THERE WAS A LOUD CRACK...



AAAAHHH!



SAVE ME! DON'T LET ME FALL!

A SHORT DISTANCE AWAY, ON A ROCKY PEAK...

I CAN SEE HIM, SIMMONS! HE'S AIMING AT THAT OVERHANG ABOVE US! IF HE MANAGES TO LOOSEN IT, HE'LL BRING A WHOLE AVALANCHE DOWN ON TOP OF US!

MORE ROCKET-GUN BULLETS EXPLODED...

WELL, WHOEVER'S DOING THE FIRING HAS GOT US WELL AND TRULY TRAPPED!





MINUTES LATER...

JOHNNY, THERE CAN'T BE *ANYONE* WITH A VOICE LIKE *MINE*! IF I WASN'T SO HAPPY AT ME DISCOVERY, I'D BE AFTER BUSTIN' YOU BOTH IN TWO FOR POT-SHOTTING AT ME!

HE WAS DOING THE SHOOTING, BLAST-OFF! AND HE'S COMING ROUND NOW!



THE MAN SAW SIMMONS...

YOU FIEND! YOU CAME BACK TO FINISH ME OFF!

THAT'S RIGHT, BEN HARVEY! I GOT TO THINKING THAT I DARE NOT RISK SOMEONE LANDING HERE ON LUPUS AND FINDING YOU... *ALIVE!*



THEN... IT HAPPENED AGAIN...

SUDDENLY A GUN APPEARED IN SIMMONS'S HAND...

WHAT IS ALL THIS ABOUT?

I... I THOUGHT YOU TWO WERE IN WITH HIM! WHEN WE FOUND GOLD HERE ON LUPUS THAT MONSTER TOOK IT BACK WITH HIM TO EARTH! AND LEFT ME BEHIND, TO DIE!



NOW I'M GOING TO SHOOT THE THREE OF... UUUHH!

AAAGH!



I KNOW WHAT IT IS! LUPUS IS GOING TO DISINTEGRATE!



GOT TO GET AWAY IN THE ROCKET SHIP! I DON'T NEED TO BOTHER ABOUT HARVEY AND THOSE TWO SPACE-FREIGHTERS NOW! IF THEY'RE NOT FINISHED ALREADY THEY SOON WILL BE... *WHEN LUPUS BREAKS UP!*



THE THREE WERE STILL ALIVE...

THIS SOMETIMES HAPPENS TO SMALL STAR FRAGMENTS LIKE THIS ONE! THEY LAST FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS, THEN GRAVITIES AND ORBIT FRICTIONS RIP THEM APART! IN MINUTES FROM NOW THERE WON'T BE ANYTHING LEFT OF LUPUS... OR US!

THEN..

IF ONLY WE COULD CLIMB OUT OF HERE AND GET BACK TO THE SPACE-SHIP! BUT THE WALLS ARE TOO SMOOTH...!

J-J-JOHNNY!
L-L-L-LOOOK!

IT'S GOING TO ATTACK US!

A GUN WON'T STOP A THING LIKE THAT!

NEVERTHELESS, JOHNNY FIRED, AND...

THE THREE MEN CLIMBED DAZEDLY TO THEIR FEET...

THAT THING MUST HAVE UNTAPPED SOME UNDERGROUND GASSES! AND THE FLASH OF YOUR GUN IGNITED THEM!

THERE'S ALSO A CHANCE IT'S BURROWED AN ESCAPE ROUTE OUT OF HERE! COME ON, WE'VE GOT NOTHING TO LOSE BY TRYING!

MEANWHILE, SIMMONS WAS AT THE CONTROLS OF 'THE DUCHESS'...

I'VE SWITCHED ON! I'VE PRESSED THE RIGHT BUTTONS! BUT NOTHING'S HAPPENING!



FRANTICALLY, AGAIN AND AGAIN, HE WENT THROUGH THE TAKE-OFF PROCEDURE. THEN...

I CAN'T FIND OUT WHAT'S WRONG! MY ONLY CHANCE OF GETTING AWAY FROM LUPUS IS TO GO BACK FOR THAT IRISH MECHANIC!



BUT EVEN WITH THE RIGHT HANDS AT THE CONTROLS, THE TEMPERAMENTAL OLD SPACE-FREIGHTER STAYED STUBBORNLY LIFELESS...

SHE'S PLAYING UP AGAIN! DO SOMETHING, BLAST-OFF! LUPUS IS GOING TO FALL TO BITS ANY SECOND!

SURE, SHE'S JUST SULKING, JOHNNY BOY. ALL SHE NEEDS IS A PAT ON THE BACK, WITH THIS SLEDGE-HAMMER!



SIMMONS STEPPED OUT THE DOOR—AND INTO A RIGHT HOOK...

I ONLY HOPE HE'S NOT... UUUUHHH!

WE MEET AGAIN, SIMMONS... THANKS TO AN OVERGROWN ROCK-WORM!



BUT...

IT HASN'T MADE ANY DIFFERENCE! SHE'S STILL JAMMED UP SOLID!

FUNNY, I WAS SURE THAT WOULD DO THE TRICK! I'LL TRY IT ONCE MORE!



THIS TIME...

THIS'LL LOOSEN HER UP... OOOOPS! THE HEAD'S COME OFF!

WATCH IT, YOU CRAZY... UUUUHHH!





NEXT INSTANT, WITH A BELLOWING ROAR, THE DUCHESS EXPLODED HER LAUNCHING ROCKETS...



SECONDS LATER...



THE MAN THEY HAD RESCUED BROKE IN...



GABBY McGLEW

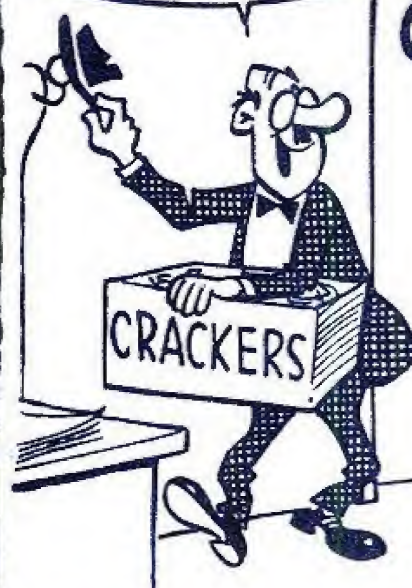


-HIS YARNS AREN'T TRUE!

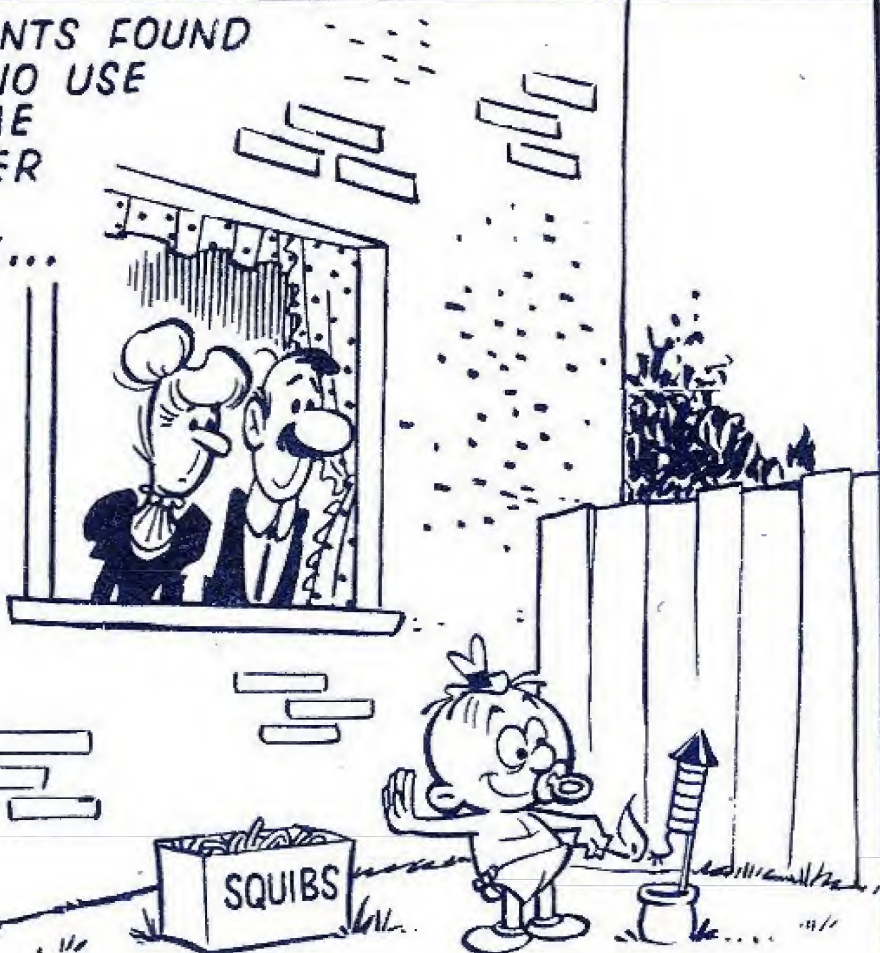
ON MY WAY
HERE I BOUGHT
THESE INDOOR
FIREWORKS FOR
MY CHILDREN!

I ALWAYS
PREFERRED
ROCKETS
WHEN I WAS
A LAD!

OFFICE



MY PARENTS FOUND
IT WAS NO USE
GIVING ME
ANY OTHER
SORT OF
FIREWORK...

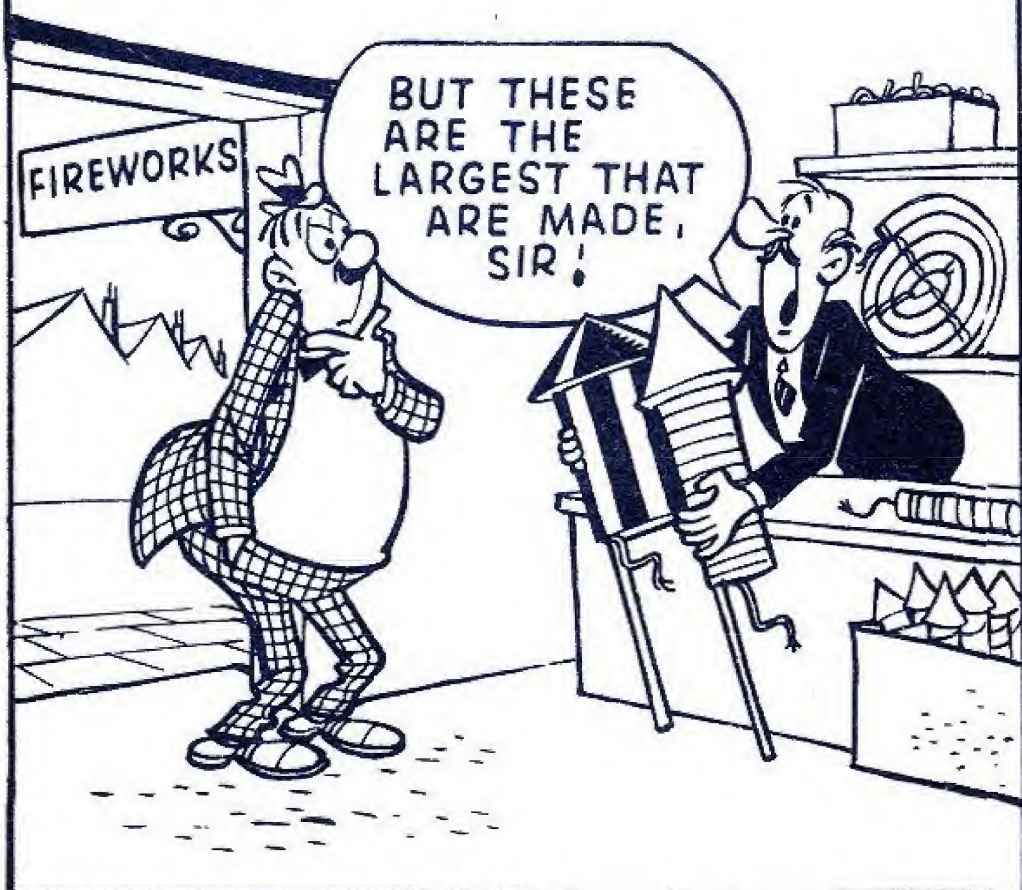


AND AS I GREW
UP, SO THE
ROCKETS GOT
BIGGER...



UNTIL THE DAY' CAME WHEN I DIDN'T
THINK THEY WERE BIG ENOUGH...

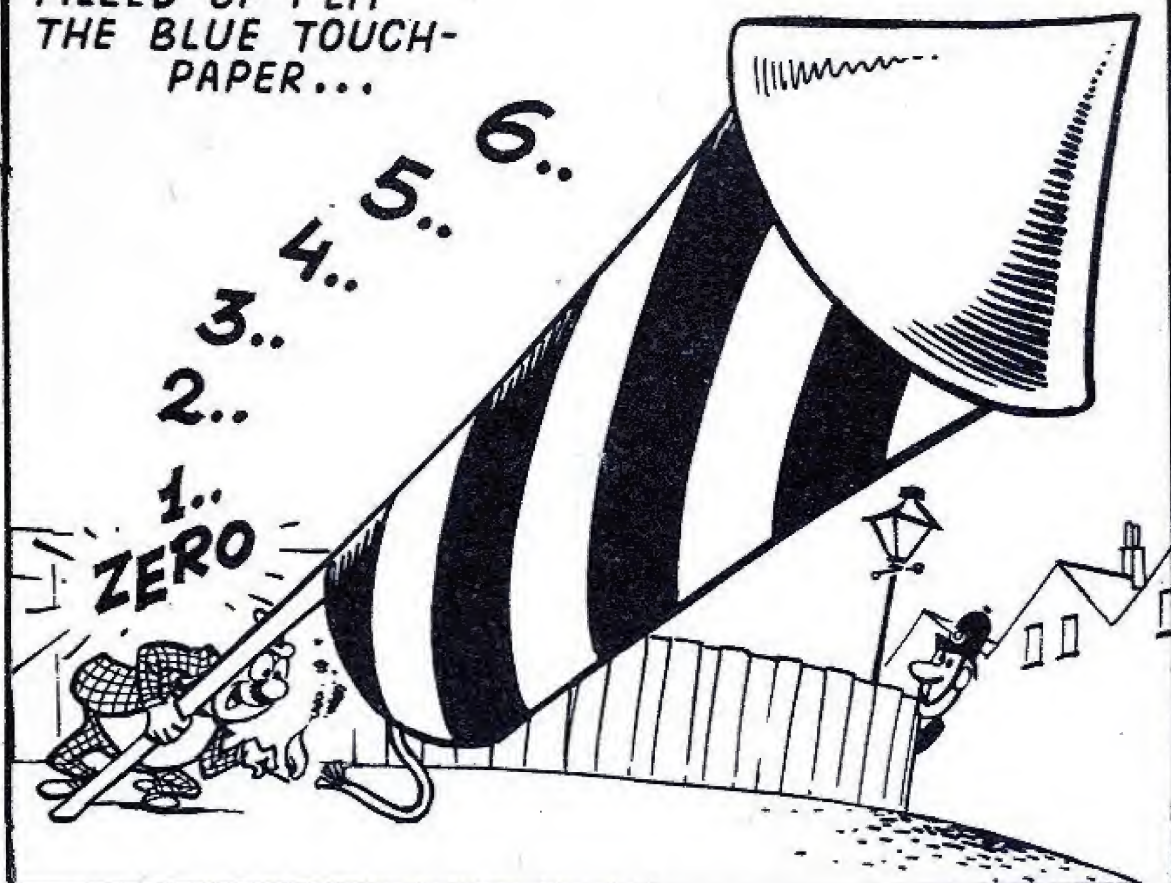
BUT THESE
ARE THE
LARGEST THAT
ARE MADE,
SIR!



SO I BOUGHT ALL THE
FIREWORKS THERE WERE,
AND POPPED THEM
INTO A COLOSSAL
HOME-MADE
ROCKET-CASE!



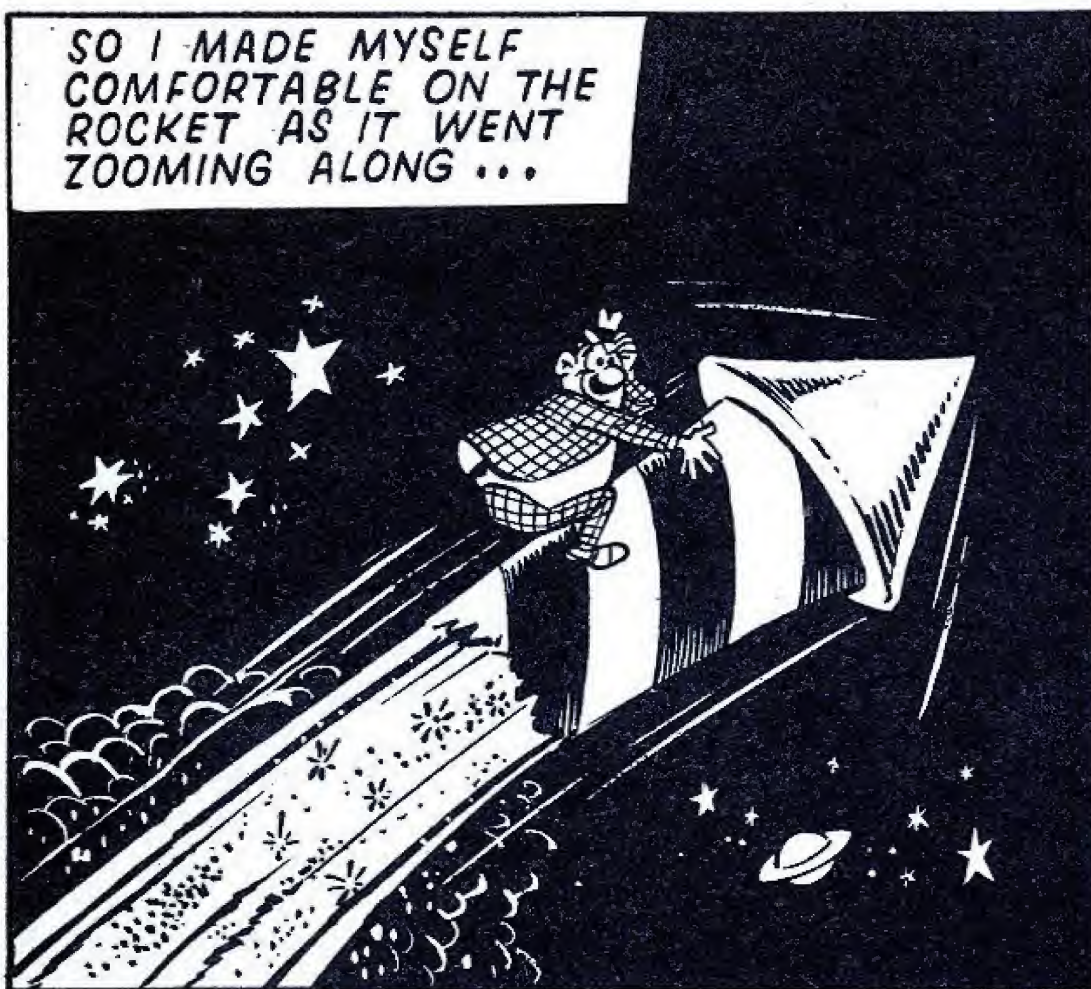
WHEN IT WAS
FILLED UP I LIT
THE BLUE TOUCH-
PAPER...



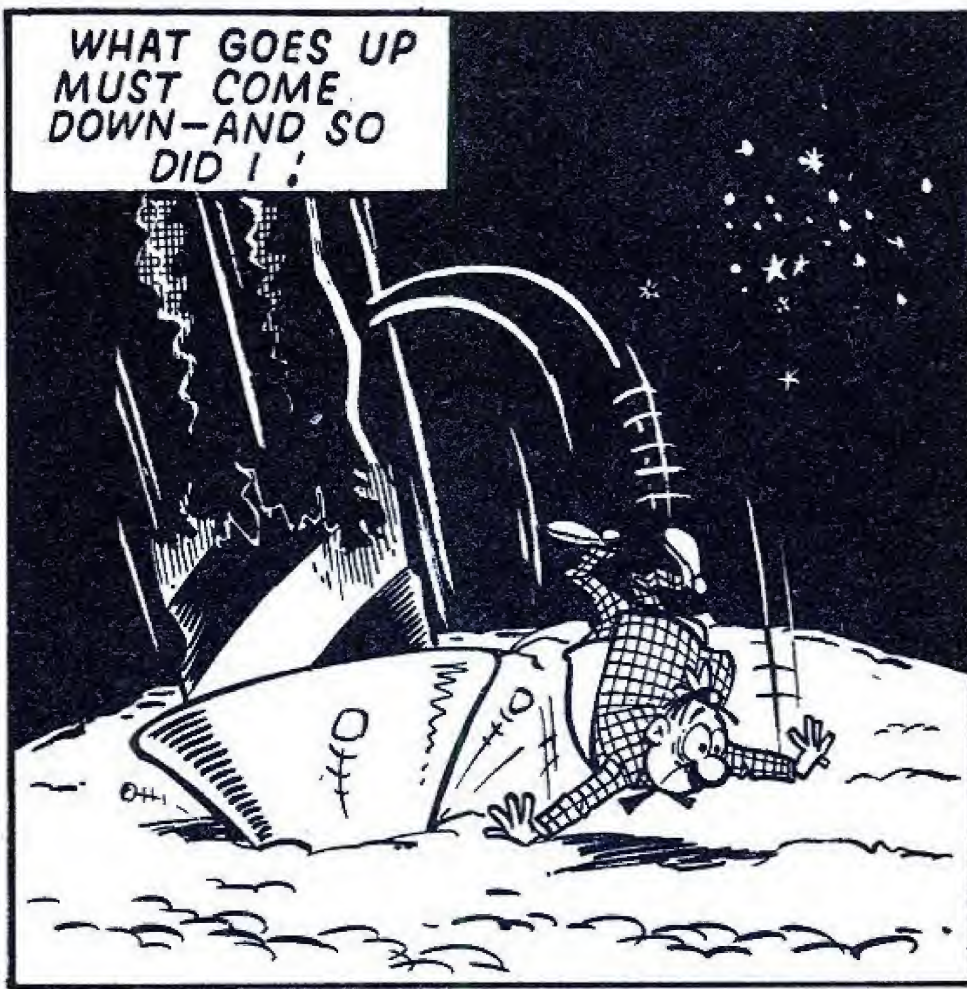
BUT IN MY EXCITEMENT
I FORGOT TO LET
GO OF THE STICK-
AND I WENT
UP, TOO!



SO I MADE MYSELF
COMFORTABLE ON THE
ROCKET AS IT WENT
ZOOMING ALONG...

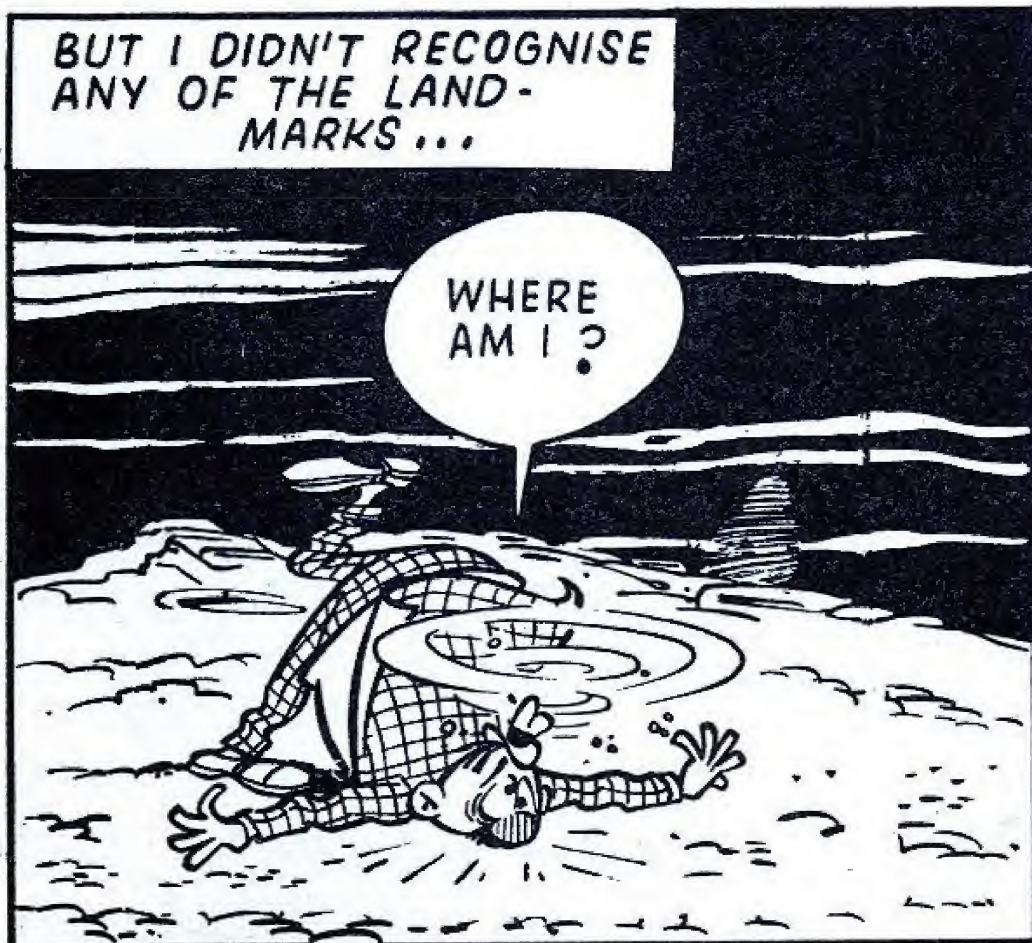


WHAT GOES UP
MUST COME
DOWN-AND SO
DID I!



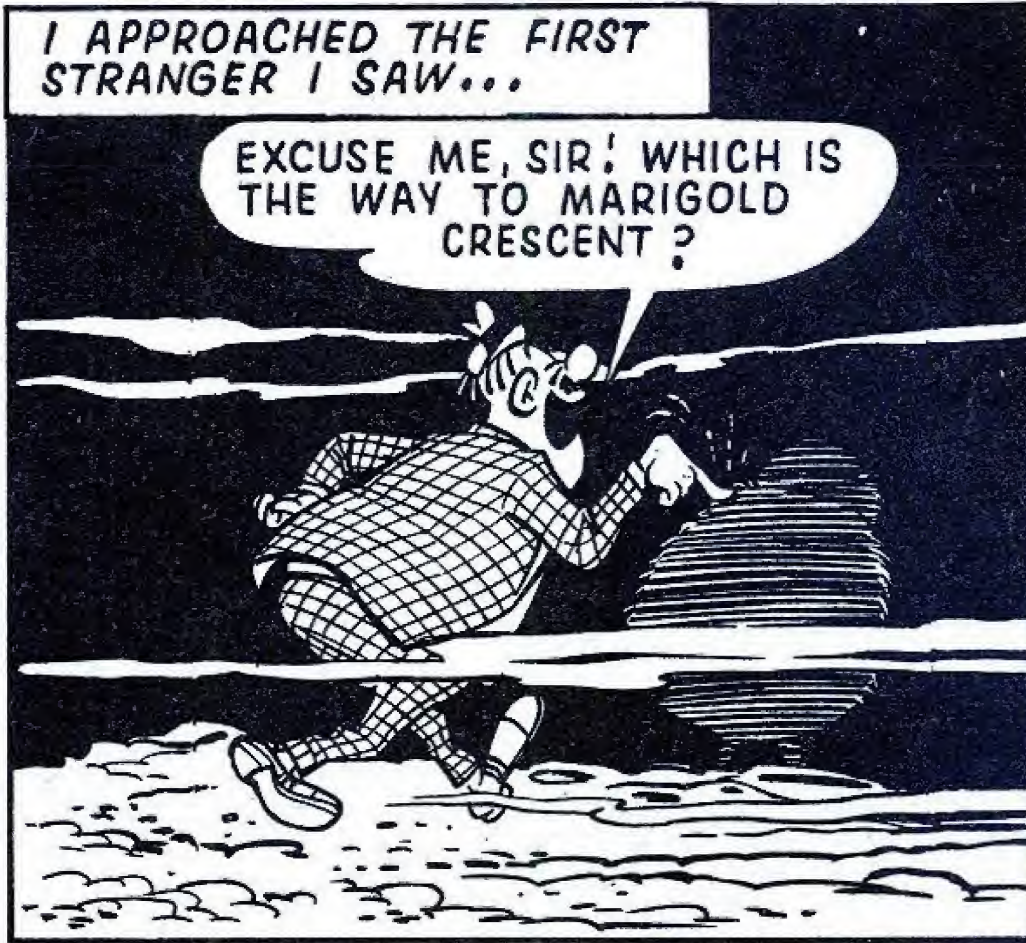
BUT I DIDN'T RECOGNISE
ANY OF THE LAND-
MARKS...

WHERE
AM I?



I APPROACHED THE FIRST
STRANGER I SAW...

EXCUSE ME, SIR! WHICH IS
THE WAY TO MARIGOLD
CRESCENT?



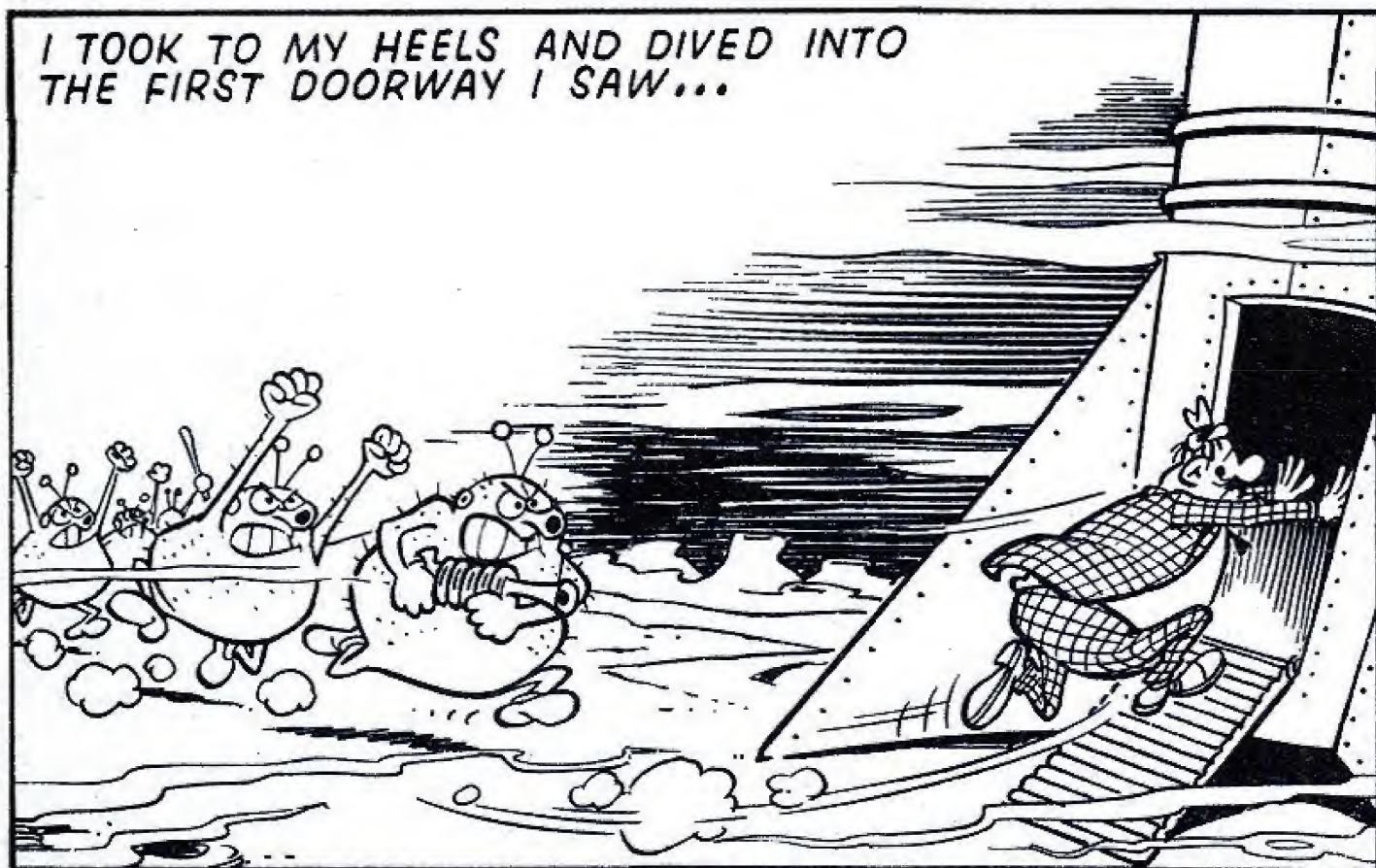
BUT WHEN THE STRANGER TURNED ROUND, I REALISED THAT HE WAS A MARTIAN...



SOME OF THE MARTIAN'S PALS CAME RUNNING—AND I DON'T THINK THEY LIKED THE LOOK OF ME, EITHER!



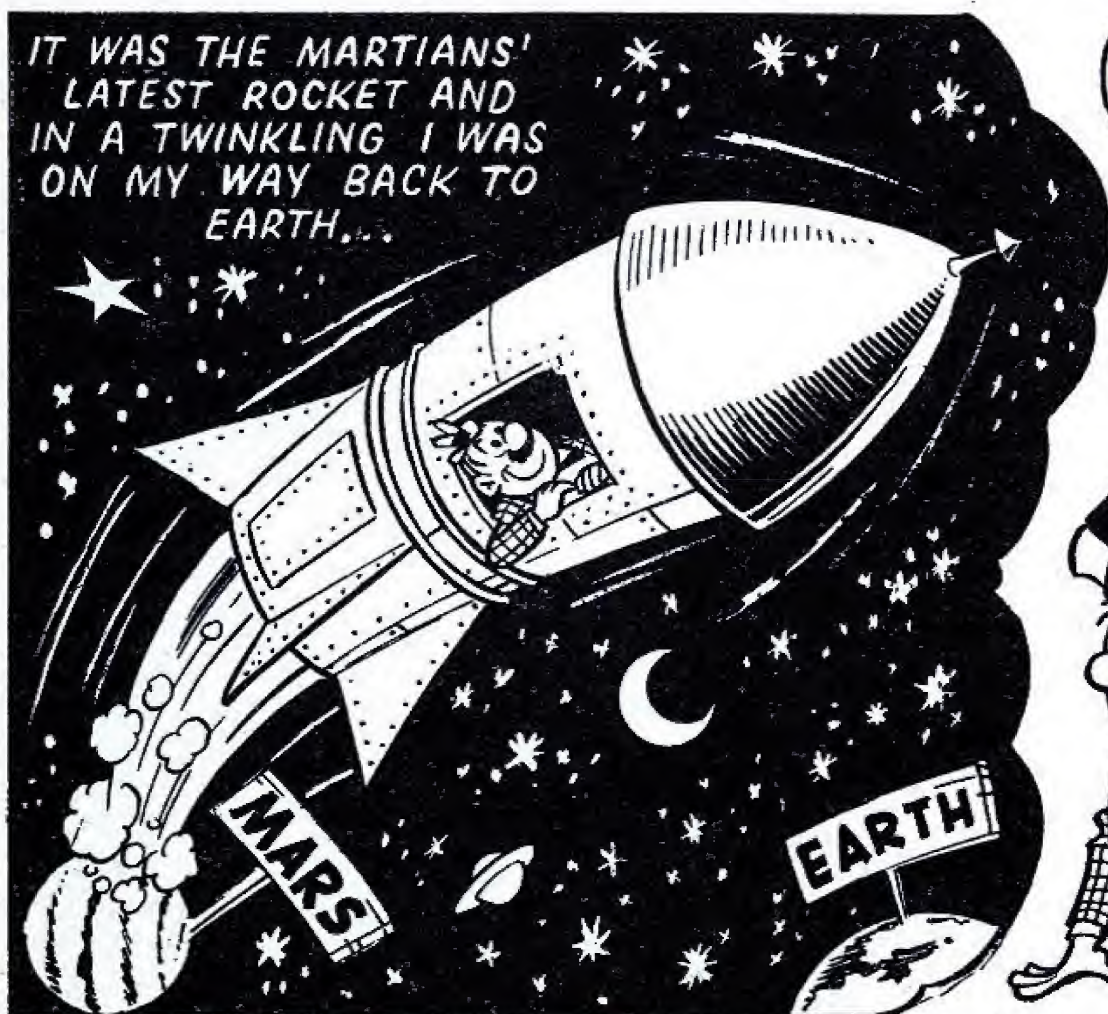
I TOOK TO MY HEELS AND DIVED INTO THE FIRST DOORWAY I SAW...



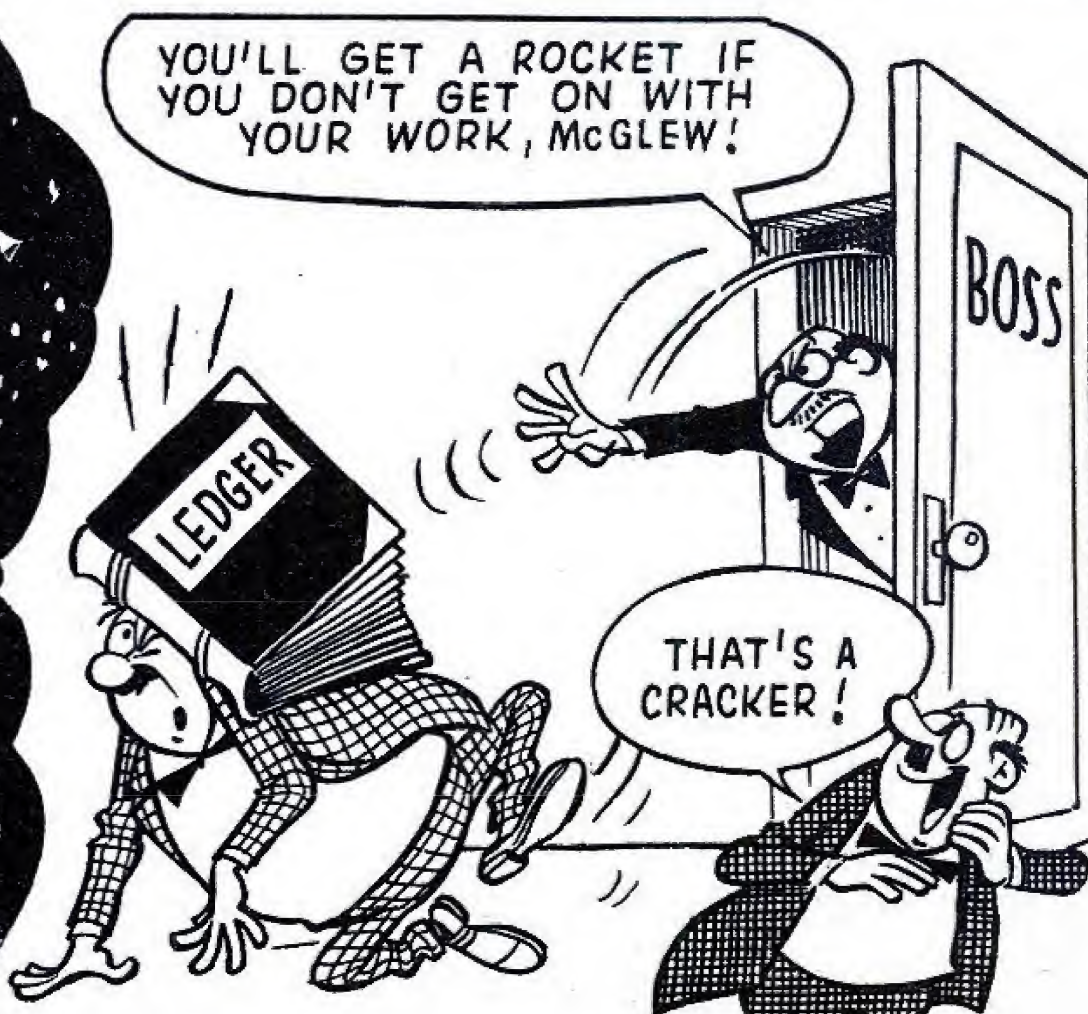
WHEN I SHUT THE DOOR SOME MECHANISM STARTED TO WORK...



IT WAS THE MARTIANS' LATEST ROCKET AND IN A TWINKLING I WAS ON MY WAY BACK TO EARTH...



YOU'LL GET A ROCKET IF YOU DON'T GET ON WITH YOUR WORK, MCGLEW!



INVASION FROM SPACE

ROD STAYED IN THE AIR FOR SOME TIME, WONDERING WHAT IT WAS ALL ABOUT, UNTIL AT LAST...

CALLING 'N' FOR NELLIE. SET COURSE ON NINETY-THREE DEGREES AND PROCEED IMMEDIATELY FOR MOUNT ARAPAHO OBSERVATORY. FURTHER ORDERS ON ARRIVAL.

OVER.



ORDERS RECEIVED AND UNDERSTOOD. BE BACK FOR TEA, I HOPE.

BUT AS HE SWUNG ON TO THE ORDERED COURSE, THINGS WERE FAR FROM CLEAR IN ROD COLLINS' MIND. IT SEEMED CRAZY TO HIM THAT HE SHOULD BE ORDERED TO TAKE BRITAIN'S NEW TOP SECRET PLANE TO AMERICA... AND MOUNT ARAPAHO OF ALL PLACES. FOR HE KNEW THAT THIS WAS THE HOME OF THE WORLD'S BIGGEST AND MOST POWERFUL TELESCOPE.



IT WAS WHILE HE WAS TESTING BRITAIN'S LATEST AIRCRAFT, X.N.1., WHICH WAS BETTER KNOWN AS 'NUCLEAR NELLIE,' THAT FAMOUS TEST PILOT, ROD COLLINS, RECEIVED AN URGENT CALL FROM THE CONTROL TOWER...



GROUND CONTROL CALLING EXPERIMENTAL AIRCRAFT 'N' FOR NELLIE. CALLING 'N' FOR NELLIE. DO NOT LAND. REPEAT, DO NOT LAND. STAND BY FOR FURTHER ORDERS.

THE SLEEK SILVER-WINGED PLANE SWEEP WESTWARDS ACROSS THE ATLANTIC UNTIL, EIGHTY FOUR MINUTES AND SEVEN THOUSAND THREE HUNDRED MILES LATER, IT TOUCHED DOWN AT MOUNT ARAPAHO, WITH ITS HUGE PARACHUTE BRAKE BILLING BEHIND IT...



MOMENTS LATER A SPEEDY PICK-UP DROVE UP AND ROD WAS GREETED BY A THREE-STAR GENERAL FROM THE U.S. AIR FORCE.



SQUADRON LEADER COLLINS, I HAVE BEEN DETAILED TO TAKE CARE OF YOU. WILL YOU COME WITH ME, PLEASE?

NOW EVEN MORE MYSTIFIED, ROD FOUND HIMSELF CONVEYED RAPIDLY TOWARDS THE MASSIVE OBSERVATORY.



ONCE INSIDE, ROD WAS AWED BY THE FANTASTIC SIZE OF THE PLACE. BUT HE WAS EVEN MORE THUNDERSTRUCK BY THE TWO FIGURES WHO GREETED HIM — NONE OTHER THAN THE PRIME MINISTER OF GREAT BRITAIN AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

AH, SQUADRON LEADER COLLINS. WE HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU. NOW WE CAN PROCEED.



THE PRIME MINISTER CAME QUICKLY TO THE POINT...

YOU HAVE NO DOUBT HEARD OF WHAT THE NEWSPAPERS ARE CALLING THE "CRAZY COMET"? YOU HAVE PROBABLY HEARD THAT ITS BEHAVIOUR IS COMPLETELY OUT OF LINE WITH THAT OF OTHER PLANETS. I WILL GO FURTHER THAN THAT, NO COMET COULD POSSIBLY DO WHAT THIS STRANGE OBJECT IS DOING.



IN FACT, THIS "CRAZY COMET" CANNOT BE A COMET AT ALL. WE WANT TO FIND OUT WHAT IT IS. WE MUST KNOW BECAUSE THIS OBJECT IS COMING TOWARDS EARTH. THE SAFETY OF THE WORLD MAY BE THREATENED.

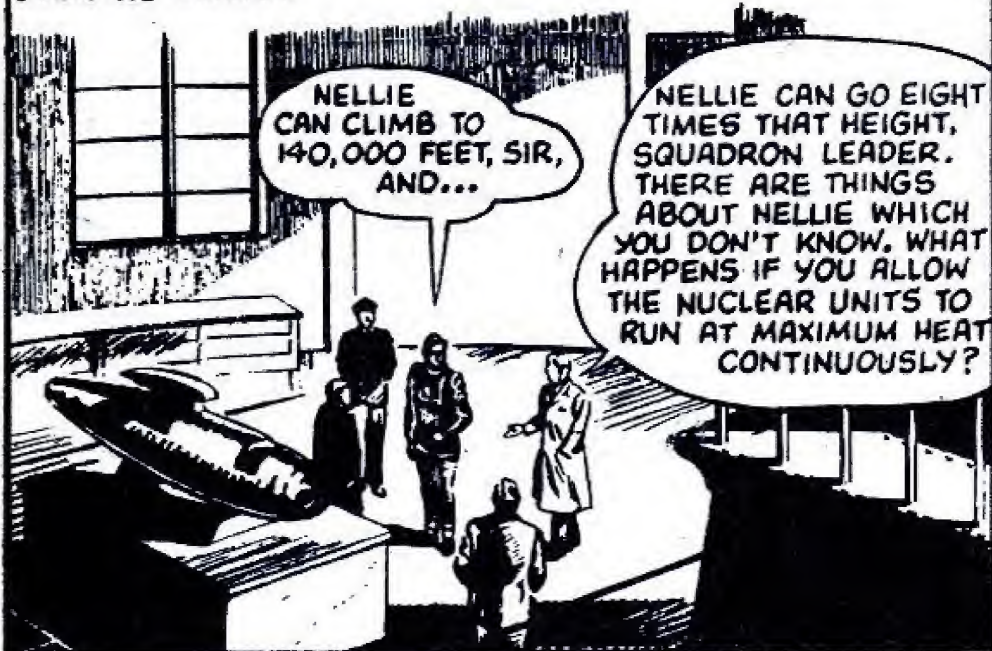


THE TEST PILOT WAS BEGINNING TO WONDER WHAT ALL THIS HAD TO DO WITH HIM WHEN THE PRIME MINISTER EXPLAINED...

THIS IS A MEGA-TELE CAMERA. IT WILL BE FITTED TO YOUR AIRCRAFT AND YOU WILL TAKE IT UP TO THE MAXIMUM ALTITUDE. THERE YOU WILL SECURE PICTURES OF THIS OBJECT WHICH WILL BE UNDISTORTED BY THE EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE. YOUR PLANE CAN GO HIGHER THAN ANY OTHER, I BELIEVE?



ROD KNEW THAT THE NUCLEAR POWER UNITS OF NELLIE — RAM-JETS USING ATOMIC HEAT — COULD DRIVE HIM UP OVER 25 MILES.



NELLIE CAN CLIMB TO 140,000 FEET, SIR, AND...

NELLIE CAN GO EIGHT TIMES THAT HEIGHT, SQUADRON LEADER. THERE ARE THINGS ABOUT NELLIE WHICH YOU DON'T KNOW. WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU ALLOW THE NUCLEAR UNITS TO RUN AT MAXIMUM HEAT CONTINUOUSLY?

ROD WHEELED ROUND IN SURPRISE AS HE RECOGNISED THE NEWCOMER AS FRANKLIN WHITLOCK, INVENTOR OF THE NUCLEAR RAM-JET AND DESIGNER OF NELLIE.

THEY COMMENCE TO BURN OUT THEIR URANIUM LININGS, GIVING OFF DANGEROUS RADIATION AND EVENTUALLY EXPLODING.



CORRECT! BUT WHILE THEY'RE DOING THAT, THE JETS ACT AS ATOMIC ROCKETS. I CALCULATE THAT YOU CAN GET UP TO AROUND ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY MILES BEFORE THE JETS BECOME DANGEROUS. YOU'LL HAVE TO GET YOUR PICTURES AND THEN JETTISON THE NUCLEAR UNITS BEFORE THEY EXPLODE. THEN GET WHAT'S LEFT OF NELLIE DOWN ON THE LANDING PARACHUTES.

IT AMOUNTS TO THIS, SQUADRON LEADER. WE'RE GOING TO SACRIFICE NELLIE, THE MOST ADVANCED AIRCRAFT IN THE WORLD, TO GET PICTURES OF THIS OBJECT IN SPACE. IT'S UP TO YOU.

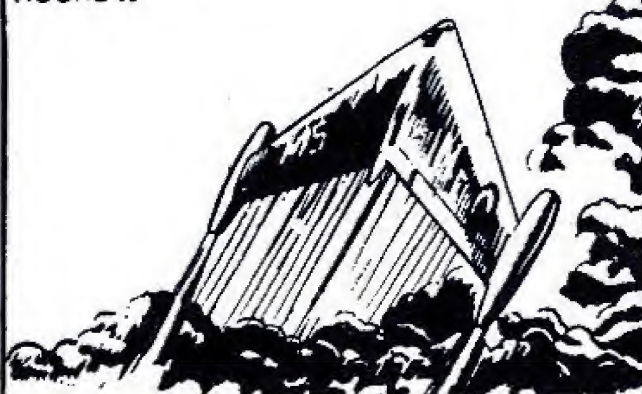


YES, SIR!

UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF FRANKLIN WHITLOCK MECHANICS FITTED THE HUGE MEGA-TELE CAMERA UNDER A SPECIAL CANOPY OF DURAPLEX. NUCLEAR NELLIE WAS READY FOR HER LAST FLIGHT.



AFTER EIGHT HOURS OF FEVERISH WORK BY THE MECHANICS ROD CLIMBED INTO THE COCKPIT AND NELLIE THUNDERED SKYWARDS LIKE A ROCKET.



ACTING ON WHITLOCK'S INSTRUCTIONS ROD WAS USING MORE POWER THAN HE HAD EVER DARED TO USE BEFORE... POWER THAT HE KNEW WOULD BURN THE HEARTS OUT OF THE MIGHTY NUCLEAR POWER UNITS.

HIGHER AND HIGHER HE ZOOMED, REACHING INTO AIRLESS SPACE, DRIVEN BY WHAT WERE NOW TWO ROARING JETS OF VAPOURISED METAL...



MUST GET THESE PICTURES SOON. THOSE NUCLEAR UNITS WON'T LAST LONG NOW.

THEN, SQUARELY INTO ROD'S SIGHTS CAME THE BRIGHT TINY SHAPE OF THE "CRAZY COMET". HE PRESSED THE ELECTRICAL CONTROL AND STARTED THE CAMERA...



WHEN ROD DARED WAIT NO LONGER, HE PRESSED THE FIRING BUTTONS THAT DETONATED THE EXPLOSIVE RELEASE GEAR AND THE TWO GLOWING NUCLEAR UNITS WERE BLASTED AWAY.



THE CENTRE PART OF THE FLYING WING, CARRYING ROD, THE CAMERA AND THE PRECIOUS PHOTOS, PLUNGED EARTHWARDS, LEAVING BEHIND THE EXPLODING POWER UNITS...



THE DOOMED MACHINE DROPPED LIKE A STONE. THEN ROD LET OUT HIS LANDING PARACHUTES. FIRST THE REGULAR ONE AND THEN THE TWO EMERGENCY ONES.



HE CRASH-LANDED ON A MOUNTAIN-SIDE AND, WITHIN MINUTES, A SEARCH PARTY HAD PICKED HIM UP AND WAS SPEEDING HIM BACK TO MOUNT ARAPAHO WITH HIS PRECIOUS FILM...



LESS THAN AN HOUR LATER THE FIRST PHOTOGRAPHS WERE READY FOR VIEWING...

YES, THAT'S NO COMET! THIS IS SOME GIANT SPACE SHIP, THE CREATION OF ALIEN CREATURES FROM SOME DISTANT COSMOS. GENTLEMEN, THE EARTH IS FACED WITH THE POSSIBILITY OF AN INVASION — AN INVASION FROM OUTER SPACE!



OUR WORST FEARS ARE CONFIRMED, MR. PRESIDENT!



IN THE DAYS THAT FOLLOWED, THE GREAT BALL IN THE SKY GOT BIGGER AND BIGGER UNTIL THERE WAS NOT ONE PERSON IN ALL THE WORLD WHO WAS NOT AWARE OF IT.



THE ENTIRE NORMAL LIFE OF THE WORLD WAS THROWN INTO CONFUSION BY THE VAST STRANGER FROM SPACE. LEADERS OF NATIONS APPEARED TO THEIR PEOPLES TO BE CALM...

MINOR EARTHQUAKE SHOCKS MAY BE EXPECTED AT ANY TIME. THIS IS BECAUSE THE SPACE-SPHERE IS CIRCLING IN AN ORBIT AROUND OUR PLANET AT A HEIGHT OF OVER ONE HUNDRED MILES. THE BEHAVIOUR OF THE SPHERE CLEARLY PROVES THAT IT IS CONTROLLED BY INTELLIGENT BEINGS, BUT AS YET WE HAVE NO REASON TO SUPPOSE THAT THESE CREATURES HAVE ANY HOSTILE INTENTION TOWARDS US. EVERY EFFORT FOR A PEACEFUL CONTACT WITH THEM IS BEING MADE.



HOWEVER, THE WATCHFUL EYES OF THE NATIONS' AIR FORCES WERE UPON THE MONSTER...



DIFFERENT PEOPLE REACTED TO THE NEWCOMER IN THE SKY IN DIFFERENT WAYS. WITCH DOCTORS, FOR INSTANCE, CLAIMED THAT IT WAS PART OF THEIR OWN MAGIC!



ON THE EIGHTH DAY OF THE SPHERE'S EERIE PATROL AROUND THE EARTH, A SPECK WAS SEEN TO DETACH ITSELF.



THE SPECK SPED DOWNWARDS AND GAINED FORM AS IT NEARED THE GROUND...



...THE INTRUDER APPEARS TO BE OF DISC SHAPE, AND IS APPROACHING AT FANTASTIC SPEED...

THE INTRUDER WAS BUT A SPECK COMPARED WITH THE GREAT SPHERE IT HAD COME FROM. EVEN SO, IT WAS HUGE COMPARED WITH THE EARTHLY AIRCRAFT.

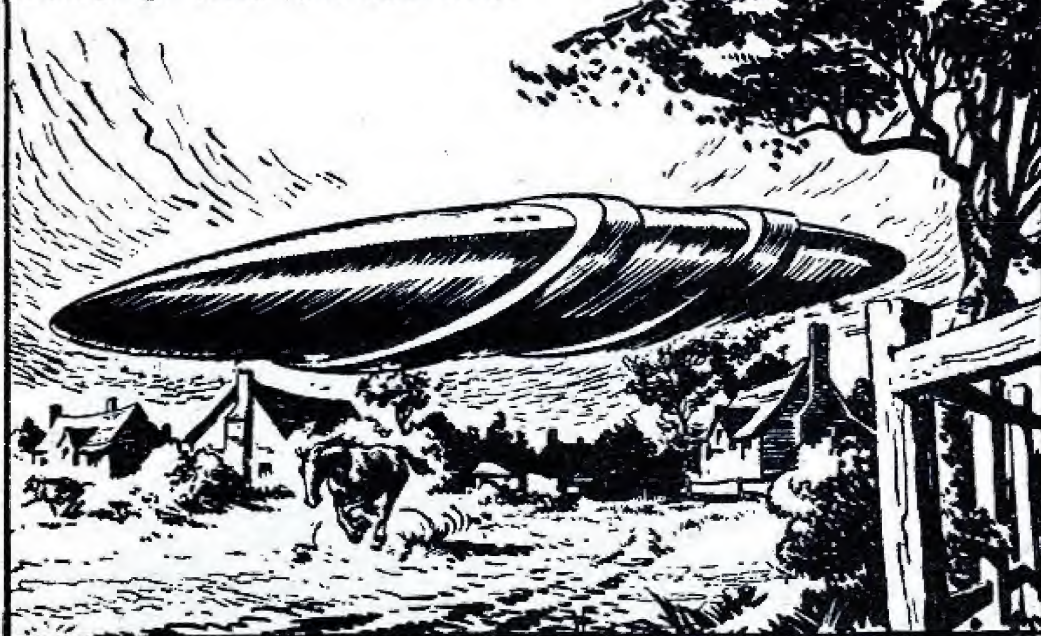


IT SWEEPED LOW OVER LONDON AND CIRCLED AT REDUCED SPEED AS THOUGH IT WAS SURVEYING THE GREAT CITY. FOR THE SAKE OF CAUTION, THE INCIDENT WAS TREATED AS THOUGH IT WAS AN AIR RAID...



...BUT THIS WAS NO ATTACK, AND THE VAST DISC SPED AWAY TOWARDS THE SOUTH WEST...

...TO DESCEND SLOWLY ON THE LITTLE HAMLET OF LANE-END CORNERS.



THE THING SAT THERE WHERE THE HAMLET HAD BEEN. BUT MORE THAN THE FATE OF THE PEOPLE OF LANE-END CORNERS WAS AT STAKE. AND SO, A FEW HOURS LATER, AN OFFICIAL ATTEMPT TO CONTACT THESE BEINGS FROM BEYOND WAS MADE. A SENIOR MEMBER OF THE BRITISH CABINET APPROACHED...



THE WOULD-BE PEACE-MAKER STOOD THERE WAITING FOR SOME SIGN FROM WITHIN THE HUGE SHELL. THEN, SUDDENLY, FROM THE SKY ABOVE CAME THE DRONING OF HIGH FLYING BOMBERS.



GENERAL SEMPLER, WHOSE AIRCRAFT ARE THOSE?

NOT OURS, SIR. ALL OUR SQUADRONS ARE GROUNDED ACCORDING TO ORDERS, UNTIL THIS ATTEMPT AT CONTACT HAS BEEN MADE. THEY'RE FOREIGN MACHINES TAKING THE LAW INTO THEIR OWN HANDS.



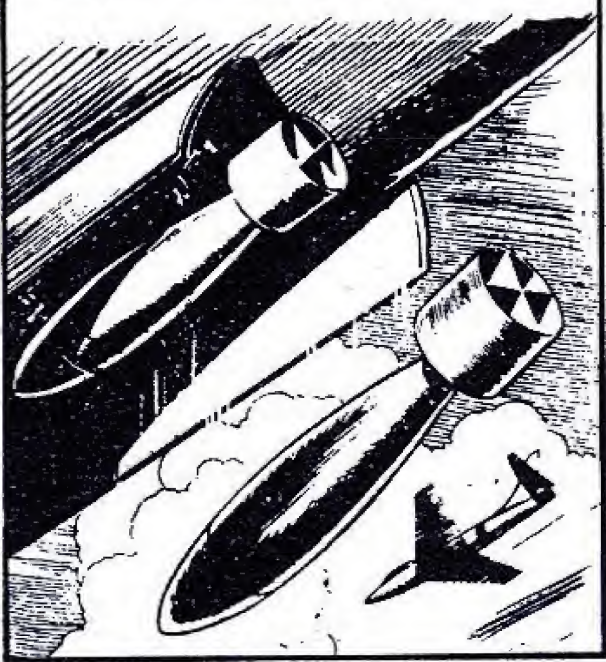
THE FORMATION ABOVE CONSISTED OF A SINGLE LARGE BOMBER SURROUNDED BY A COMBAT BOX OF ESCORTING JET FIGHTERS...



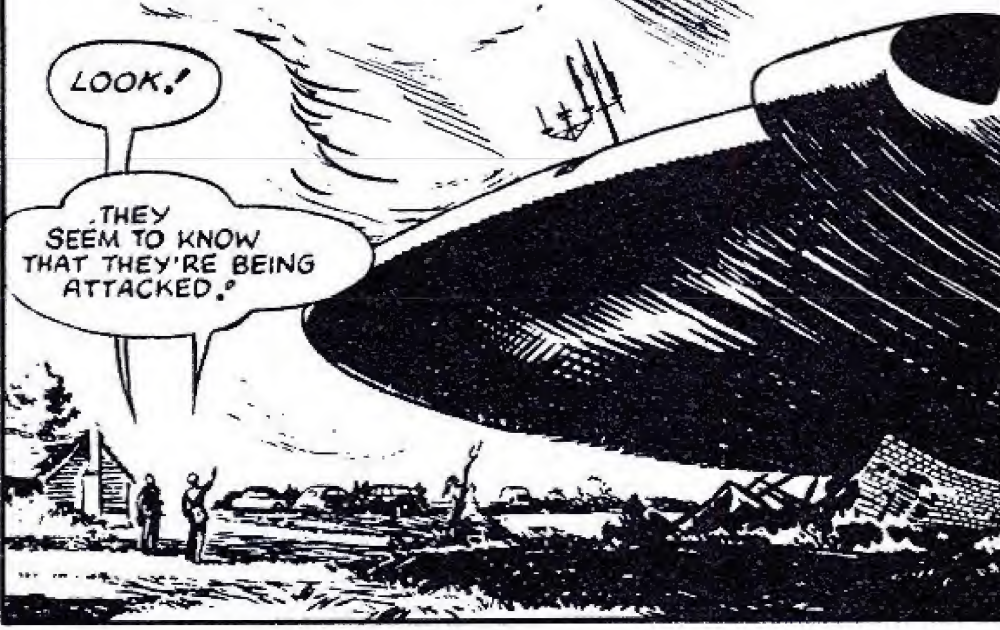
AND, SQUARELY IN THE BOMBER'S SIGHTS, WAS THE INTRUDER FROM OUTER SPACE.



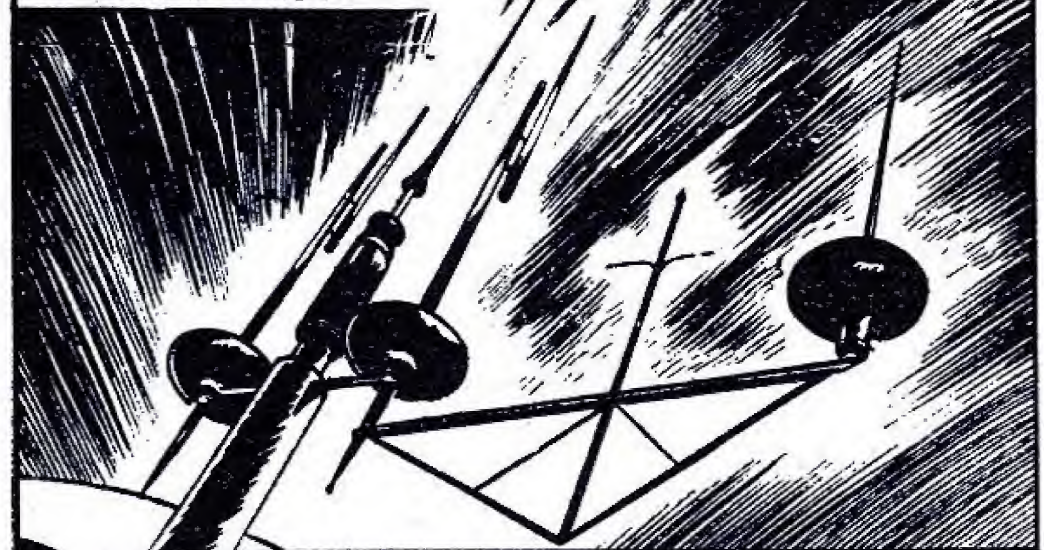
THE BOMB DOORS OPENED, AND THEN...



AT THAT MOMENT A STRANGE-LOOKING ANTENNA POKED OUT OF THE DISC.



THEN A FLASH LIKE FORKED LIGHTNING STREAKED TOWARDS THE FALLING BOMBS!



THE RAY OF BLINDING LIGHT MET ITS TARGET, AND...



... THE ATTACKING FORCE WAS BLASTED FROM THE SKY BY THE EXPLOSION OF ITS OWN WEAPONS!



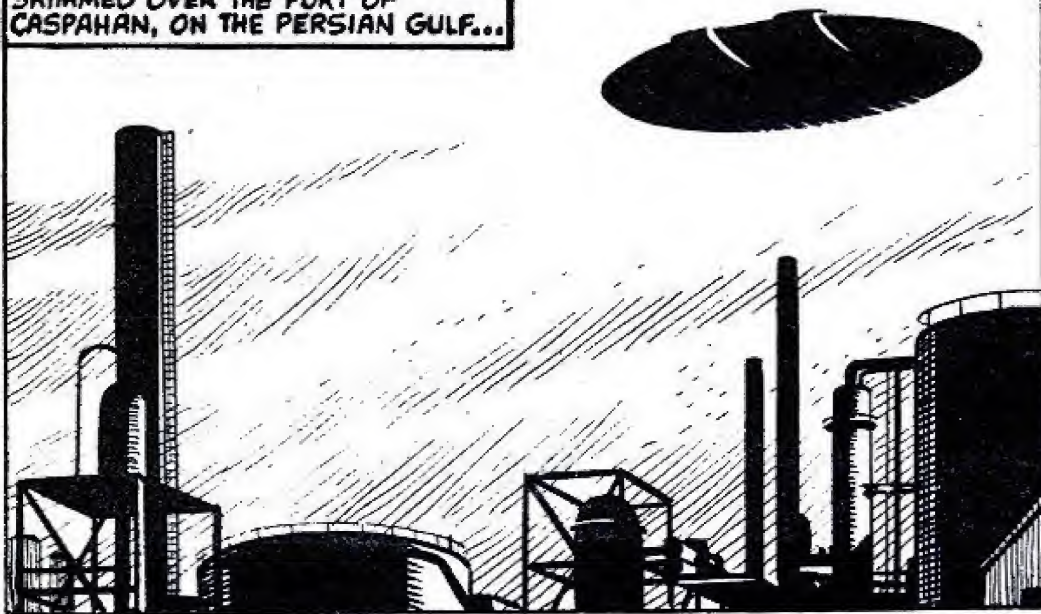
THEN THE GREAT DISC ROSE UP - AND AS THE GROUND BENEATH IT WAS UNCOVERED, THE HORRIFIED WATCHERS SAW THAT LANE-END CORNERS WAS GONE!



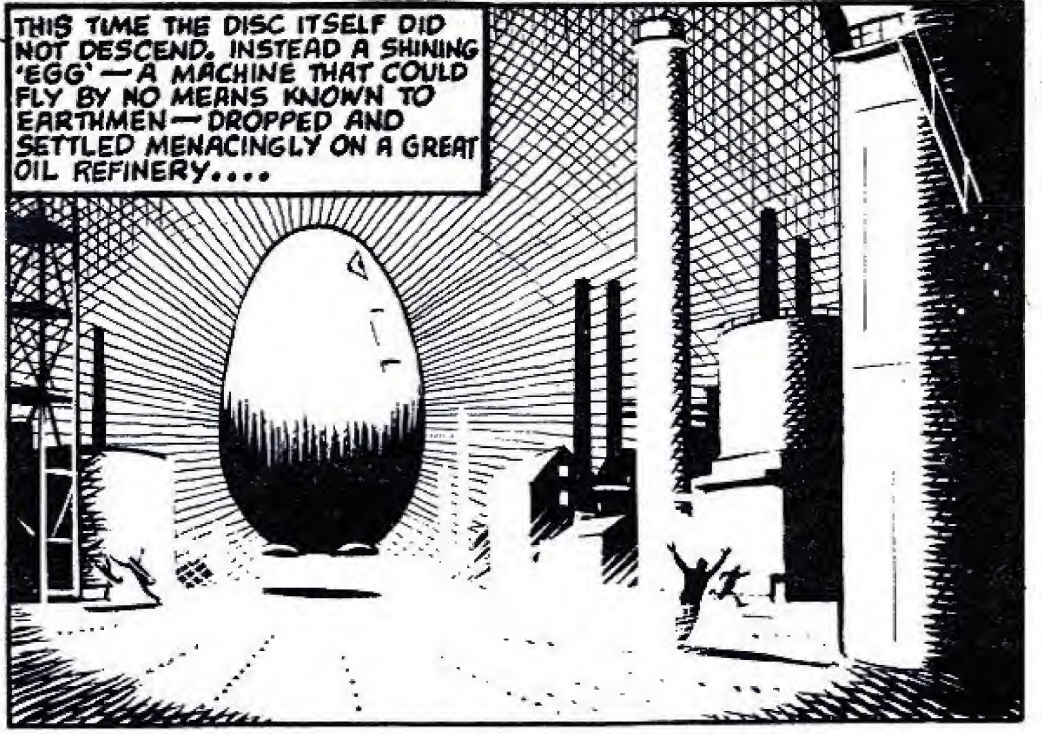
SEMLER - THERE GOES OUR LAST CHANCE OF PEACE!



ANY SPECULATION THAT THE WORLD HAD SEEN THE LAST OF THE INVADERS FROM SPACE SOON CEASED WHEN THE DARK SHAPE OF A MIGHTY DISC SKIMMED OVER THE PORT OF CASPAHAN, ON THE PERSIAN GULF...



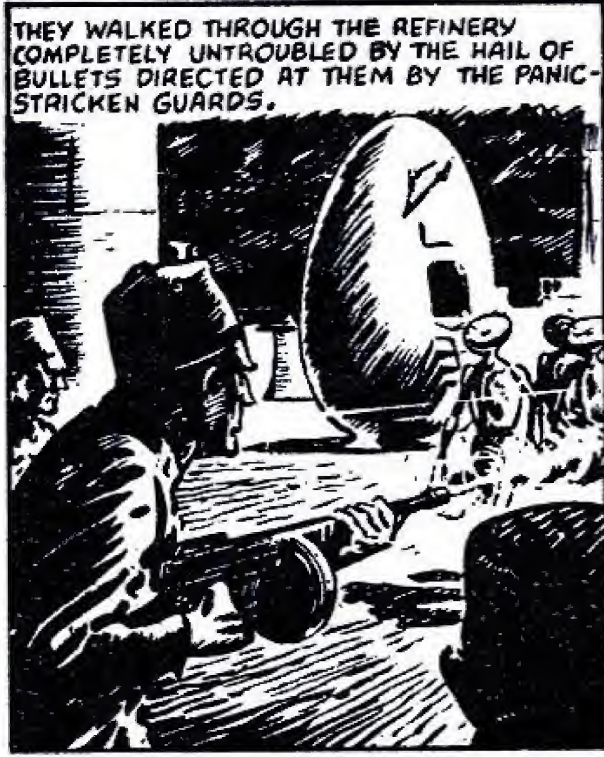
THIS TIME THE DISC ITSELF DID NOT DESCEND, INSTEAD A SHINING 'EGG'—A MACHINE THAT COULD FLY BY NO MEANS KNOWN TO EARTHMEN—DROPPED AND SETTLED MENACINGLY ON A GREAT OIL REFINERY....



... AND THEN THE EARTH GOT ITS FIRST GLIMPSE OF THESE BEINGS FROM ANOTHER WORLD...



THEY WALKED THROUGH THE REFINERY COMPLETELY UNTRUBLED BY THE HAIL OF BULLETS DIRECTED AT THEM BY THE PANIC-STRIKEN GUARDS.



THEN SUDDENLY A GREAT ROAR WAS HEARD AS SOME HOT FLYING LEAD PIERCED ONE OF THE OIL TANKS.



BUT STILL THE GLEAMING, UNCONQUERABLE FIGURES OF THE INVADERS WALKED ON, UNAFFECTED BY THE BLAZING INFERNO...

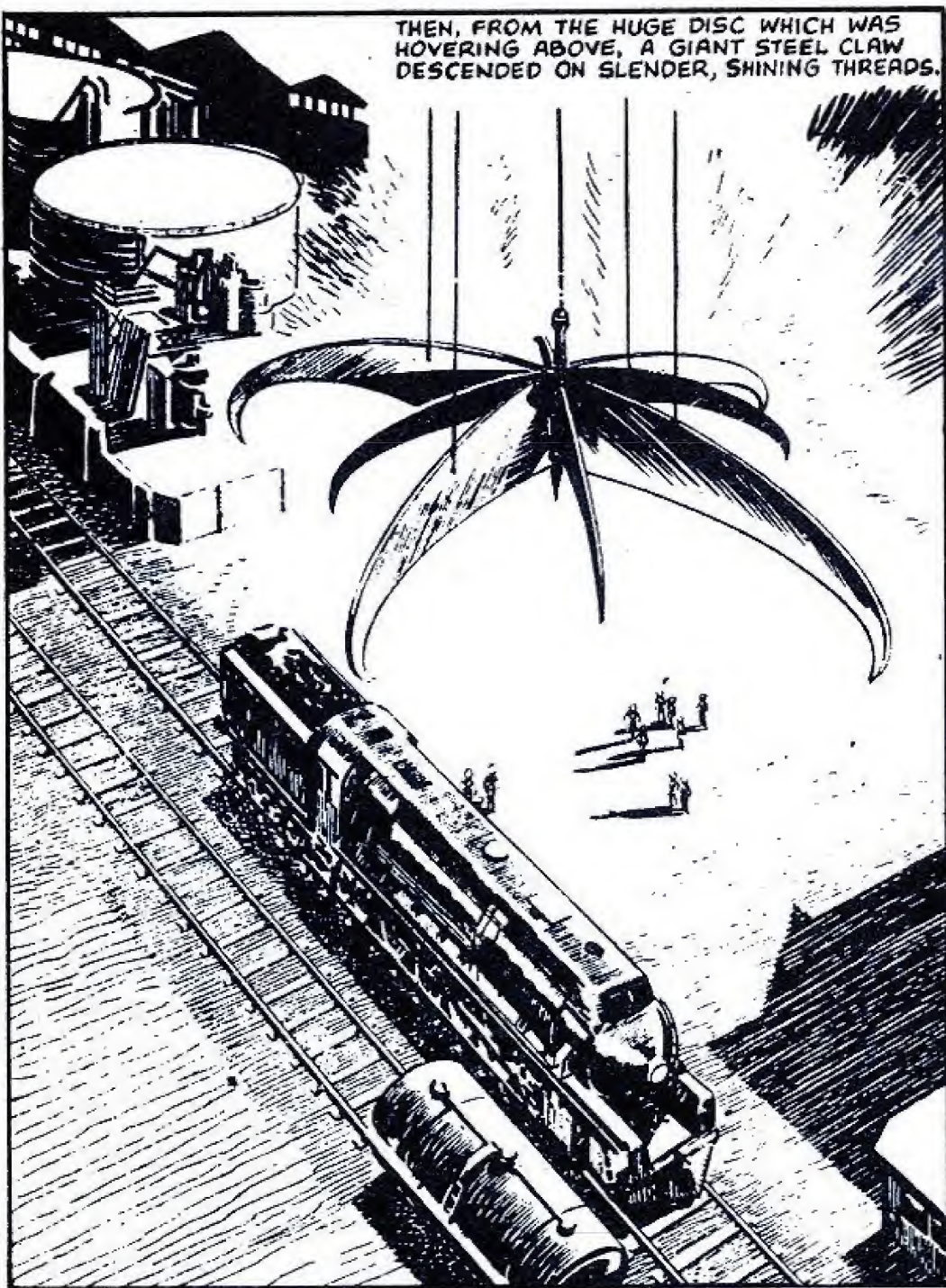


ON THEY MARCHED UNTIL THEY CAME TO THE MARSHALLING YARD OF THE REFINERY...

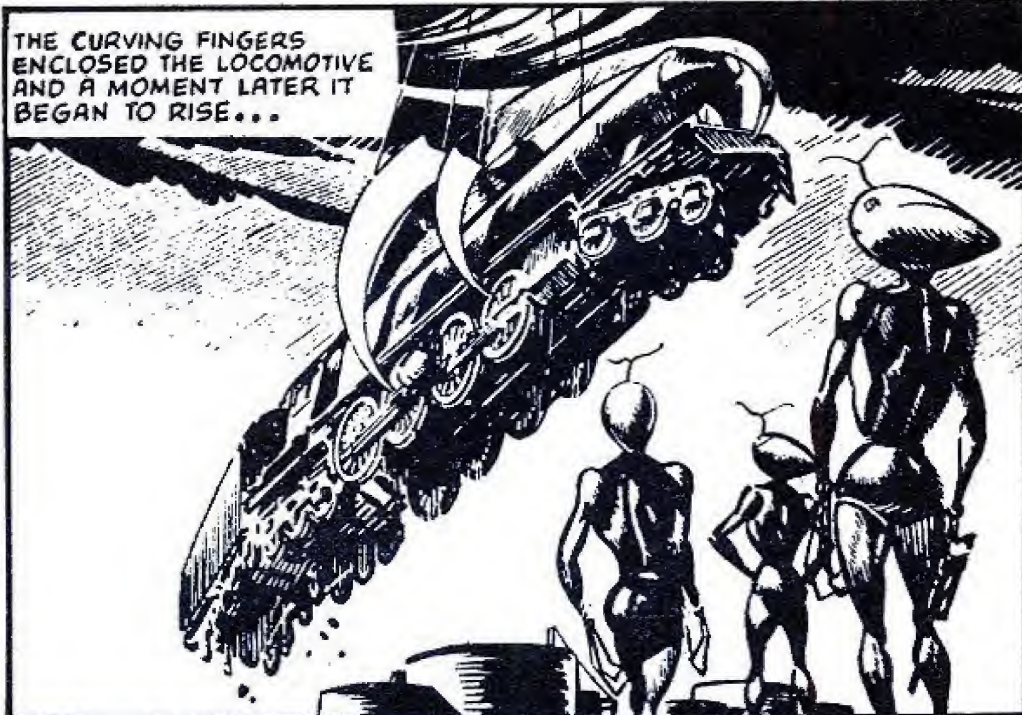


IT WAS THE LOCOMOTIVE THAT SEEMED TO BE THE CENTRE OF THEIR INTEREST. FOR SEVERAL MINUTES THEY EXAMINED IT CAREFULLY...





THEN, FROM THE HUGE DISC WHICH WAS HOVERING ABOVE, A GIANT STEEL CLAW DESCENDED ON SLENDER, SHINING THREADS.



THE CURVING FINGERS ENCLOSED THE LOCOMOTIVE AND A MOMENT LATER IT BEGAN TO RISE...

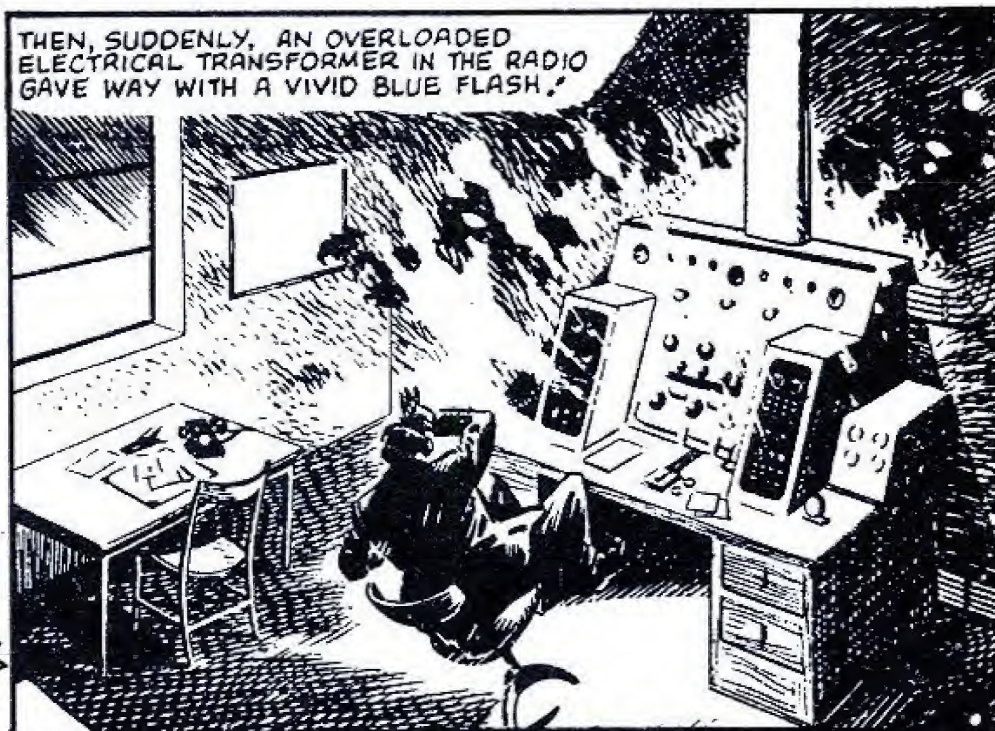


THE WEIRD CREATURES FROM SPACE THEN MADE THEIR WAY BACK TO THEIR EGG-LIKE FLYING MACHINE...



MEANWHILE A TERRIFIED RADIO OPERATOR WAS SENDING OUT FRANTIC CALLS FOR HELP.

RADIO
CASPAHAN! EMERGENCY
CALL! THE SPACE RAIDERS
ARE HERE! THE REFINERY'S
ABLAZE! SEND HELP!



THEN, SUDDENLY, AN OVERLOADED ELECTRICAL TRANSFORMER IN THE RADIO GAVE WAY WITH A VIVID BLUE FLASH.

OUTSIDE, A PASSING INVADER STOPPED WITH A SUDDEN, VIOLENT JERK AND FELL SILENTLY TO THE GROUND.



UNAWARE OF THEIR COMPANION'S FATE, THE INVADERS ENTERED THEIR FLYING MACHINE WHICH ROSE SWIFTLY INTO THE AIR AND DISAPPEARED AS QUICKLY AS IT HAD COME.



WHAT ARE THEY?
WHAT DO THEY WANT WITH
US? AND WHY DID THEY
TAKE THAT ENGINE?

THESE WERE THE QUESTIONS BUZZING IN THE HEADS OF ALL THE REFINERY WORKERS AS THEY APPROACHED THE STILL BODY OF THE CREATURE FROM THE UNKNOWN.



WELL
AT LEAST WE'VE
GOT ONE OF THEM —
MAYBE IT'LL GIVE US
THE ANSWER TO THE
MAIN QUESTION —
WHAT THEY ARE!

SWIFTLY THE NEWS SWEEPED ROUND THE WORLD. THE FIRST OF THE APPARENTLY INVINCIBLE CREATURES HAD FALLEN INTO HUMAN HANDS. AND IN LONDON A MEETING OF WORLD-FAMOUS SCIENTISTS REQUESTED THAT THE BODY SHOULD BE RUSHED TO THEM FOR EXAMINATION...



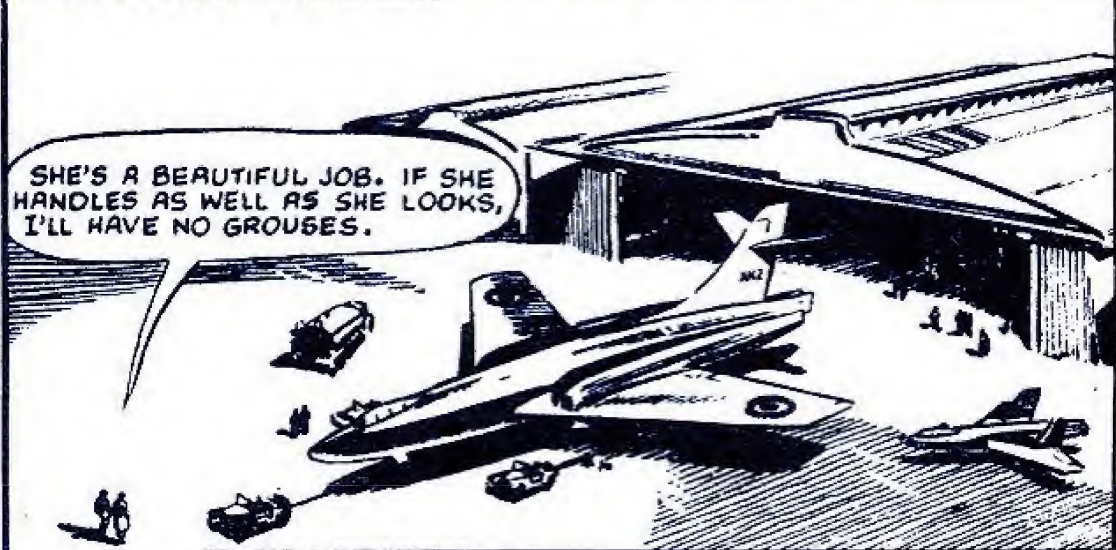
LATER FRANKLIN WHITLOCK, WHOSE NUCLEAR AIRCRAFT, NELLIE, HAD BEEN DESTROYED WHEN TEST PILOT ROD COLLINS TOOK IT UP TO GET A PHOTOGRAPH OF THE COMET, BURST INTO ROD'S ROOM...

I SEE THEY'VE GOT ONE OF THOSE THINGS. I'D CERTAINLY LIKE TO HAVE A LOOK AT IT.



THAT'S JUST WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO DO! GET READY, COLLINS. NELLIE NUMBER TWO IS FINISHED. YOU'RE GOING TO TAKE HER ON HER FIRST TRIP - TO COLLECT THE BODY.

AS X.N.2., AS NELLIE NUMBER TWO WAS OFFICIALLY KNOWN, WAS ROLLED OUT OF THE HANGAR ROD COLLINS SAW HER FOR THE FIRST TIME. SHE WAS A BIGGER JOB THAN HER PREDECESSOR AND SHE HAD BOOSTERS IN TWO PAIRS OF ROCKETS...



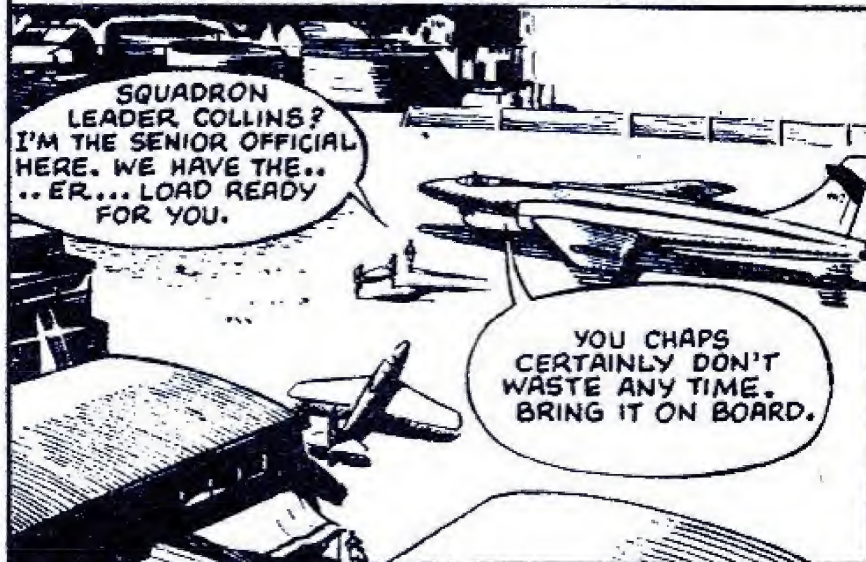
SHE'S A BEAUTIFUL JOB. IF SHE HANDLES AS WELL AS SHE LOOKS, I'LL HAVE NO GROUNDES.



TO CASPAHAN?

YES. HERE ARE YOUR OFFICIAL ORDERS. I'M AFRAID YOU'LL HAVE TO TAKE NELLIE NUMBER TWO UP WITHOUT ANY TESTS!

WITHIN AN HOUR ROD COLLINS WAS TOUCHING DOWN AT THE LANDING STRIP ALONGSIDE THE GREAT CASPAHAN REFINERIES IN THE HEAT OF THE PERSIAN GULF...



SQUADRON LEADER COLLINS? I'M THE SENIOR OFFICIAL HERE. WE HAVE THE... ER... LOAD READY FOR YOU.

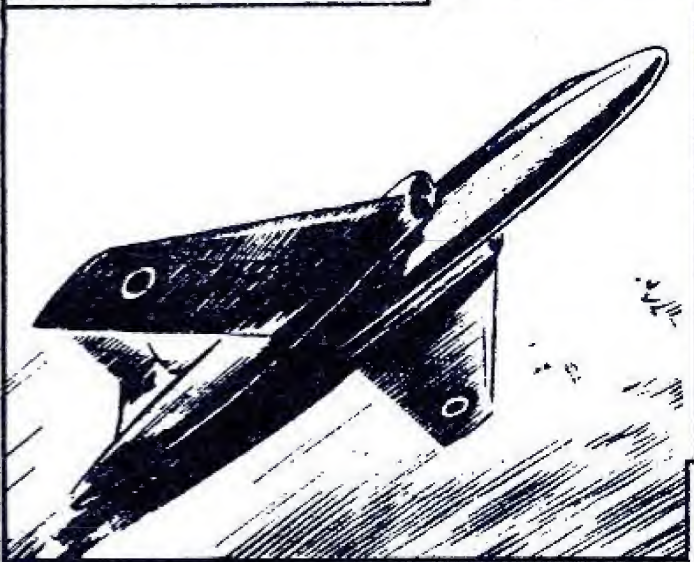
YOU CHAPS CERTAINLY DON'T WASTE ANY TIME. BRING IT ON BOARD.



GOOD LUCK! AND GO EASY WITH THOSE BOOSTERS FOR A START..

I'LL WATCH IT! SO LONG.

BIG AS SHE WAS, THE GIANT X.N.2. LIFTED FROM THE RUNWAY LIKE A PINT-SIZED FIGHTER AND THE POWERFUL RAM-JETS SENT HER SCREAMING INTO THE SKY...



PUT IT OVER THERE. AND GO STEADY!

ROD FELT A QUEER CRAWLING OF HIS SPINE AS HE STARED AT THE STILL BODY OF THE CREATURE FROM SPACE.



WHERE IN THE GALAXY DO THEY COME FROM? WHAT ARE THEY UP TO? ARE THEY JUST WEIGHING US UP BEFORE THEY ATTACK? ... BEFORE THEY WIPE US OFF THE FACE OF THE UNIVERSE?

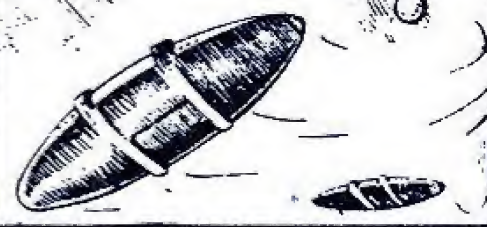
ALL OVER THE WORLD PEOPLE WERE ASKING THOSE SAME QUESTIONS. WHERE HAD THESE STRANGE BEINGS COME FROM? WHAT DID THEY WANT?



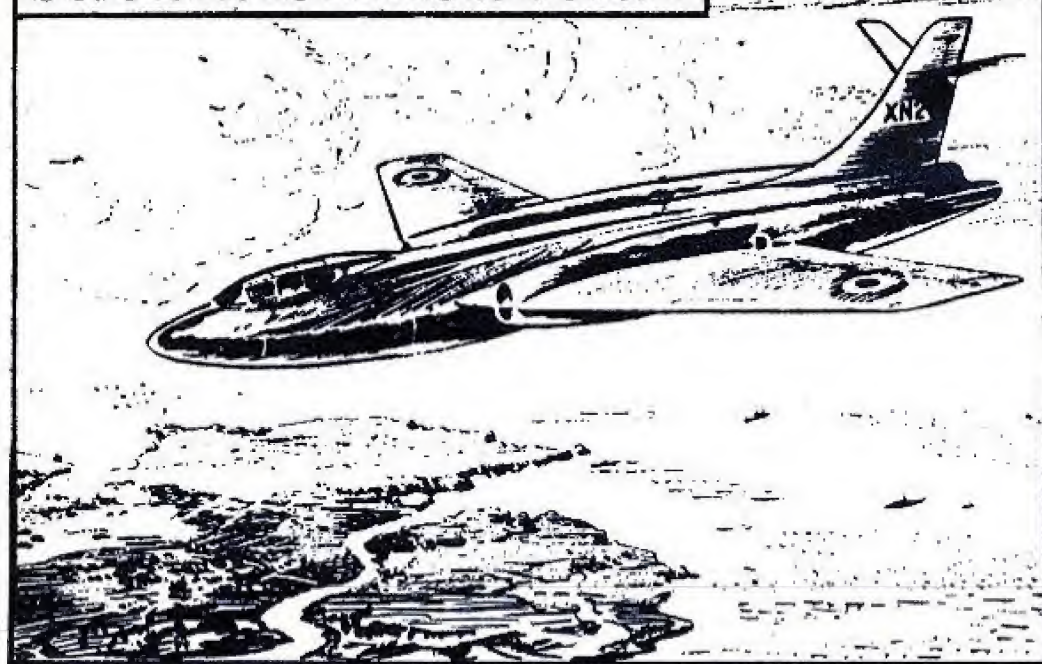
THEN ANOTHER THOUGHT STRUCK ROD - SUPPOSE THESE CREATURES WERE JUST AN ADVANCE PARTY - A MERE VANGUARD TO FEEL OUT THE WAY FOR INVASION ON A VAST SCALE!

WHAT MADE THEM EVEN MORE MYSTERIOUS WAS THEIR BEHAVIOUR. WHY SHOULD THEY DESCEND ON A PEACEFUL ENGLISH VILLAGE AND UPROOT IT FROM THE GROUND? AND WHAT DID THEY WANT WITH A RAILWAY ENGINE?

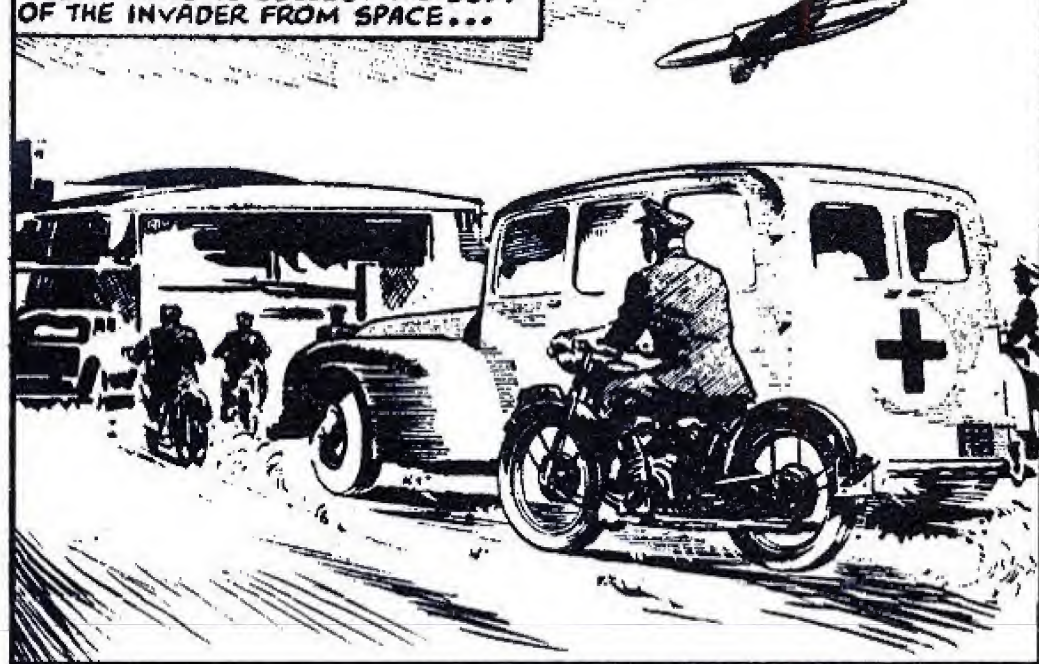
THEIR ACTIONS WERE NOT THOSE OF WOULD-BE CONQUERORS... ALTHOUGH, WITH THEIR WEAPONS AND MACHINES, IT WAS QUITE CLEAR THAT THEY COULD HAVE BEEN.



WITH THESE QUESTIONS STILL UNANSWERED ROD COLLINS WAS SOON STREAKING BACK THROUGH THE STRATOSPHERE HEADING FOR LONDON WITH HIS WEIRD CARGO...



AND AT LONDON AIRPORT, AN AMBULANCE WITH POLICE MOTOR-CYCLE ESCORT, WAS WAITING TO COLLECT THE BODY OF THE INVADER FROM SPACE...



LATER, IN THE BRITISH SCIENCE INSTITUTE, LEADING SCIENTISTS OF MANY NATIONS EXAMINED THE ALIEN...



SIR RAYMOND HART, THE BRITISH SCIENTIST, INTERJECTED QUIETLY...

SO THAT EXPLAINS WHY OUR PRESENT WEAPONS ARE USELESS AGAINST THEM! WE MUST START WORK ON A RADIO WEAPON AT ONCE, GENTLEMEN! THE FATE OF THE WORLD LIES IN OUR HANDS! IF THE INVADERS SHOULD ATTACK IN FORCE BEFORE WE ARE READY WE WILL BE OVERWHELMED... WE MUST FIND THE WAVELENGTHS THAT ARE POISONOUS TO THEM!

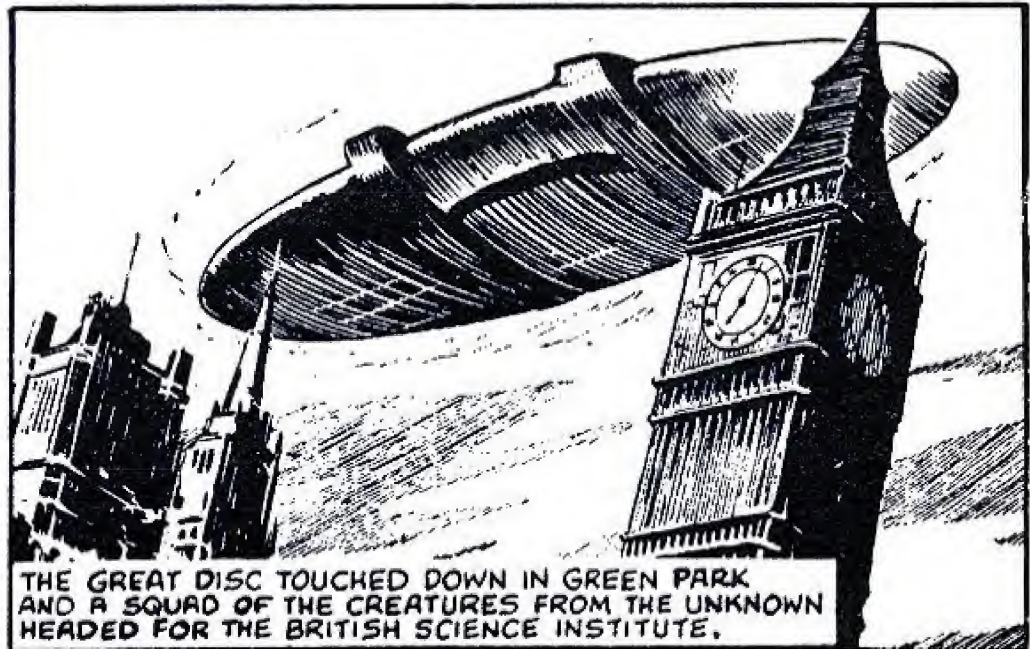


THEN MONSIEUR LEBEL, THE NOTED FRENCH SCIENTIST, PURSED HIS LIPS AND SPOKE...

IN MY OPINION THESE CREATURES ARE FED BY RADIO ENERGY! BY SHORT CIRCUITING OF THE TRANSFORMER AT CASPAMAN MAY HAVE THROWN OUT AN ULTRA-SHORT WAVE THAT WAS POISON TO THEIR SYSTEMS AT SHORT RANGE...



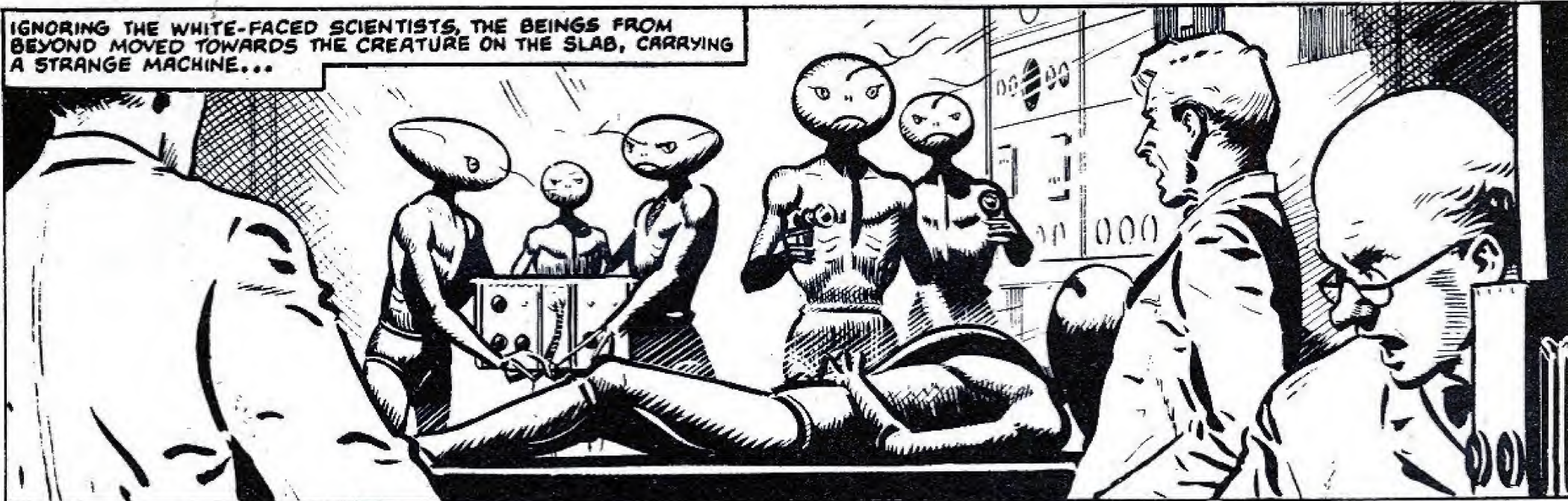
AT THAT VERY MOMENT A DARK SHADOW WAS FALLING OVER LONDON!



THE DOORS OF THE INSTITUTE CRASHED OPEN...



IGNORING THE WHITE-FACED SCIENTISTS, THE BEINGS FROM BEYOND MOVED TOWARDS THE CREATURE ON THE SLAB, CARRYING A STRANGE MACHINE...



SUCTION-PADS WERE ATTACHED TO BOTH SIDES OF THE SILENT FIGURE AND THE MYSTERIOUS MACHINE BEGAN TO PULSATE.



THE HUM FROM THE MACHINE ROSE TO A SHRIEK... AND SLOWLY THE FIGURE ON THE SLAB SAT UPRIGHT.



THE BRILLIANT SCIENTISTS ALL GASPED IN AMAZEMENT.

DONNERWETTER! THEY'VE BROUGHT HIM BACK TO LIFE!

NO! DON'T YOU SEE? HE WASN'T DEAD! IT WAS THE MISSING HEART-BEATS THAT MISLED US! THEY'VE SIMPLY REVIVED HIM. THAT MUST BE ONE OF THEIR RADIO-ENERGY MACHINES!



WITHIN MINUTES THE MEN FROM SPACE HAD HELPED THEIR COMRADE BACK TO THEIR HUGE FLYING SAUCER AND WERE GONE.



LOOK! THERE THEY GO! WHAT'S THEIR GAME?

WE'RE STILL AS FAR FROM FINDING A DEFENSIVE WEAPON AGAINST THEM AS EVER WE WERE. I RECKON THEY'RE JUST TOYING WITH US. WHEN THEY DO STRIKE, CIVILISATION WILL BE WIPED OUT.



THE ULTRA-SHORT RADIO WAVE WEAPON IS OUR ONLY HOPE. WE MUST WORK ON THOSE LINES AT ONCE!

THE FOLLOWING DAY SAW THE NEXT MOVE OF THE INVINCIBLE STRANGERS. IT WAS A MOVE WHICH LEFT THE FRIGHTENED WORLD BEWILDERED AND WONDERING. OVER LOWER EGYPT THE ALIEN GIANT DISC DESCENDED NEAR THE VALLEY OF THE PHARAOHS...

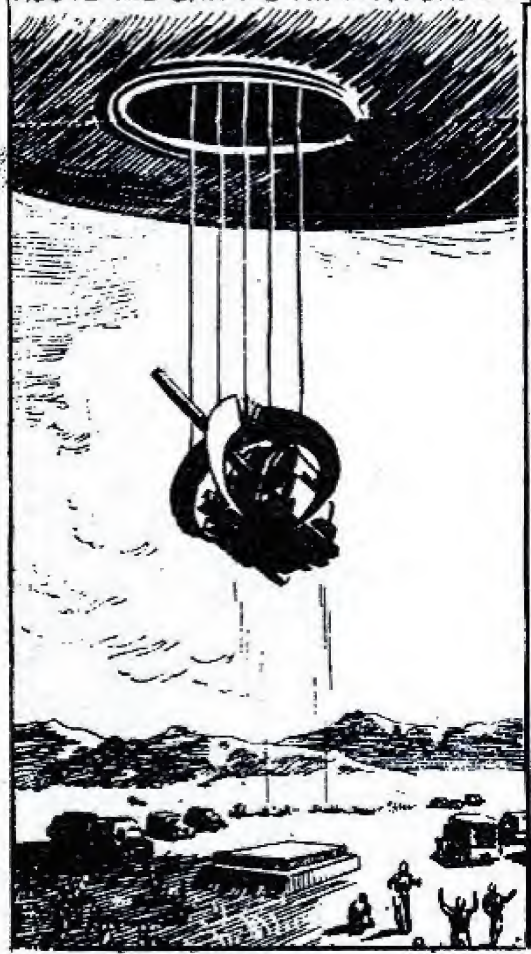


...AND THE HUGE CLAW APPEARED AND TORE THE ANCIENT STATUE OF MEMNON RIGHT OUT OF THE DESERT SANDS BEFORE DRAWING IT UP INTO THE MAW OF THE GIANT DISC.



ALLAN, IL ALLAN! THE EVIL SPIRITS FROM THE STARS, FLEE!

TWENTY HOURS LATER OVER THE NEVADA DESERT, AMERICA'S MIGHTY NEW ATOM-GUN WAS SWEEPED INTO THE ALIEN FLYING MACHINE AND CARRIED OFF TO THE PARENT PLANET, HIGH ABOVE THE EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE...



SEVERAL DAYS OF TENSE WAITING FOLLOWED. IN WASHINGTON A HURRIED CONFERENCE OF THE HEADS OF WORLD STATES WAS HELD... OLD SUSPICIONS AND HATREDS WERE FORGOTTEN IN AN ANXIOUS ATTEMPT TO SOLVE THE MYSTERY OF THE ALIENS AND THEIR ACTIONS. AND OVER ALL HUNG THE FEAR OF WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN NEXT... MEANWHILE, IN MID-ATLANTIC, THE LINER 'ORCANIA' STEAMED STEADILY WESTWARDS....



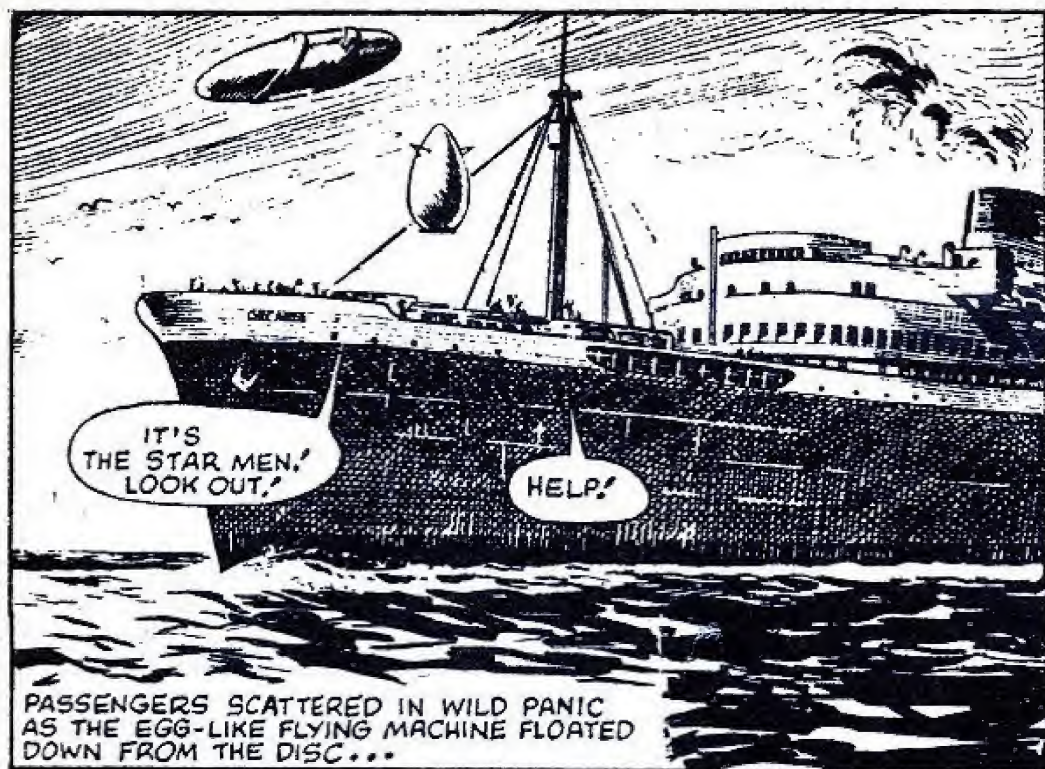
ON THE BRIDGE OF THE LINER, THE FIRST OFFICER SCANNED THE SKY...



THERE'S SOMETHING COMING TOWARDS US, SIR. I THINK IT'S... IT'S THE SPACE RAIDERS!

THE VAST, HUMMING MACHINE HOVERED LOW OVER THE GREAT LINER, COMPLETELY DWARFING IT!

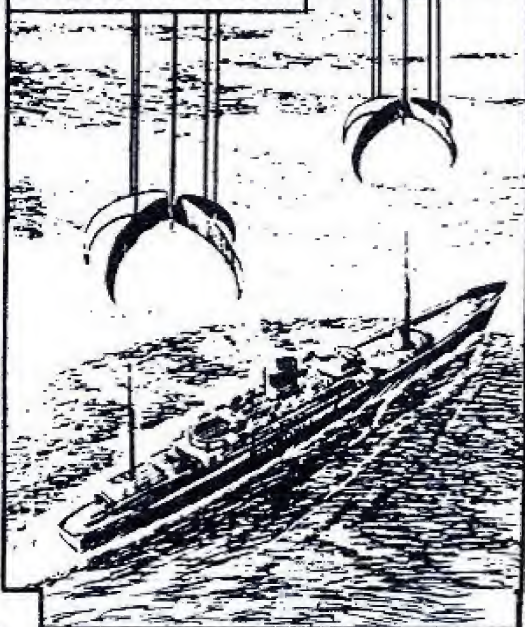




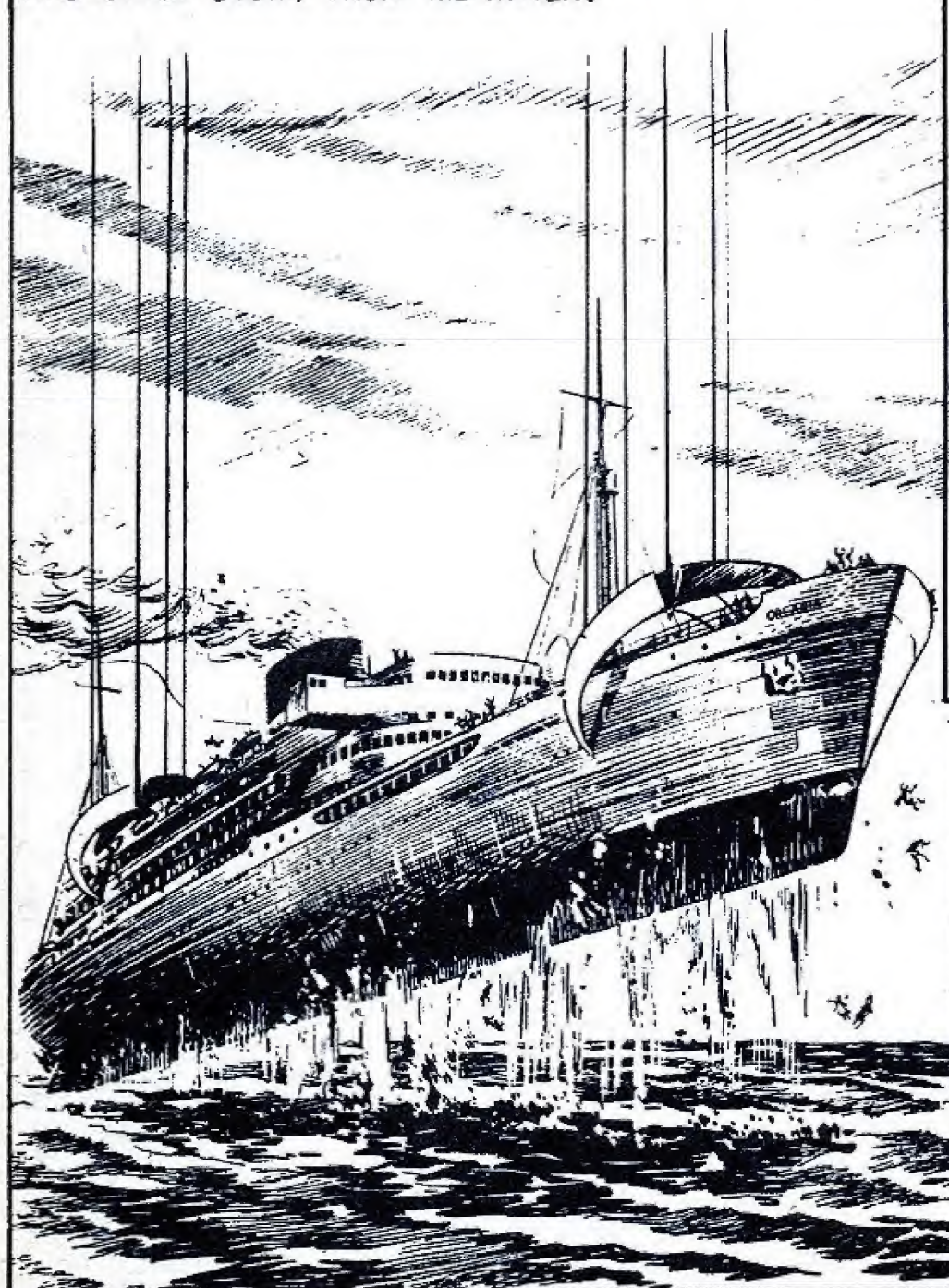
ADVANCING STEADILY ALONG THE NOW DESERTED DECKS, THE SPACE STRANGERS IGNORED THE VOLLEY OF BULLETS THAT TORE THROUGH THEM!



THEN FROM ABOVE DESCENDED TWO OF THE MAGNETIC GRABS, ON SLENDER CABLES.



THERE WAS A MAD SCRAMBLE FOR THE RAILS AS THE VESSEL WAS LIFTED BODILY FROM THE WATER!



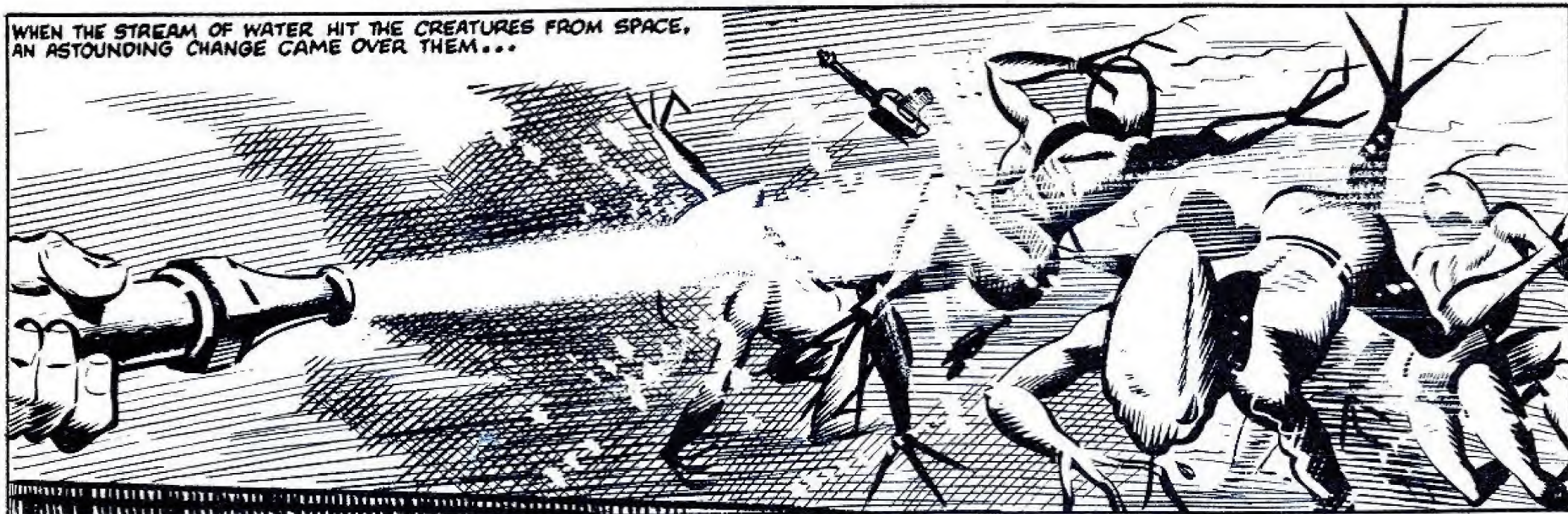
THEN JOCK MAC TAVISH, THE CHIEF ENGINEER, RACED UP FROM THE ENGINE ROOM...



GRIMLY, THE TOUGH SCOT GRABBED THE DECK HOSE AND SENT A JET OF WATER SHOOTING TOWARDS THE SPACEMEN...



WHEN THE STREAM OF WATER HIT THE CREATURES FROM SPACE, AN ASTOUNDING CHANGE CAME OVER THEM...



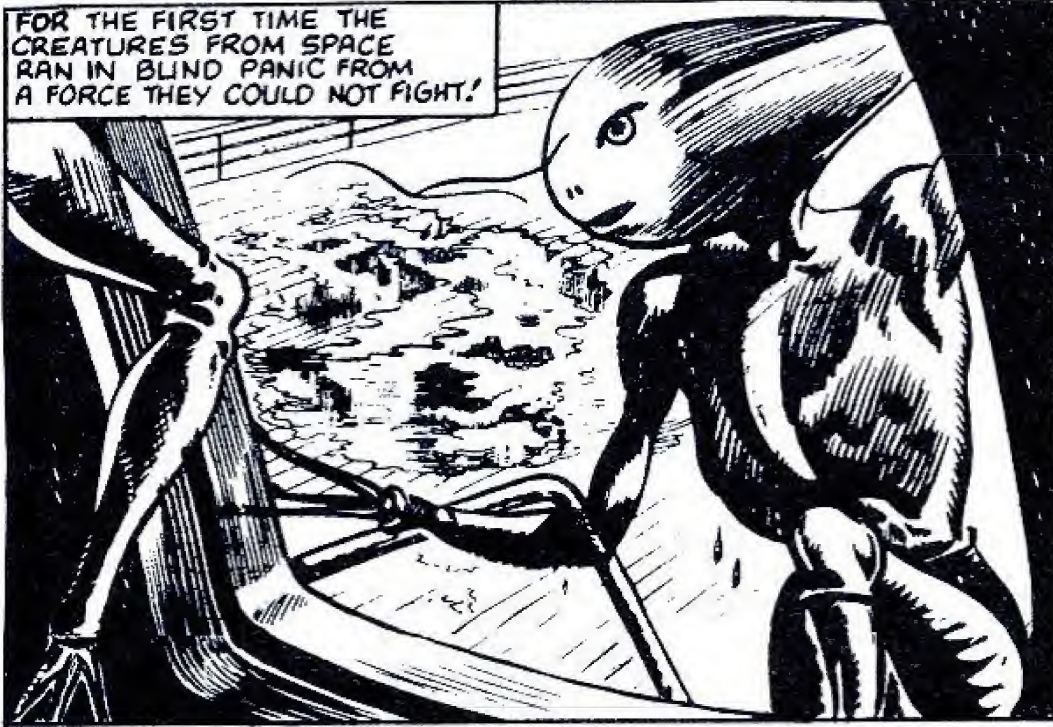
GREAT SCOTT! THEY'RE VANISHING, MAN! THEY'RE DISAPPEARING!



LIKE SNOWFLAKES IN THE SUNSHINE THE STRICKEN CREATURES WERE VANISHING!



FOR THE FIRST TIME THE CREATURES FROM SPACE RAN IN BLIND PANIC FROM A FORCE THEY COULD NOT FIGHT!



MOMENTS LATER THEIR EGG-LIKE FLYING MACHINE WAS SPEEDING BACK TO THE GIANT DISC ABOVE WHILE THE HUGE GRABS RELEASED THEIR HOLD ON THE SHIP...

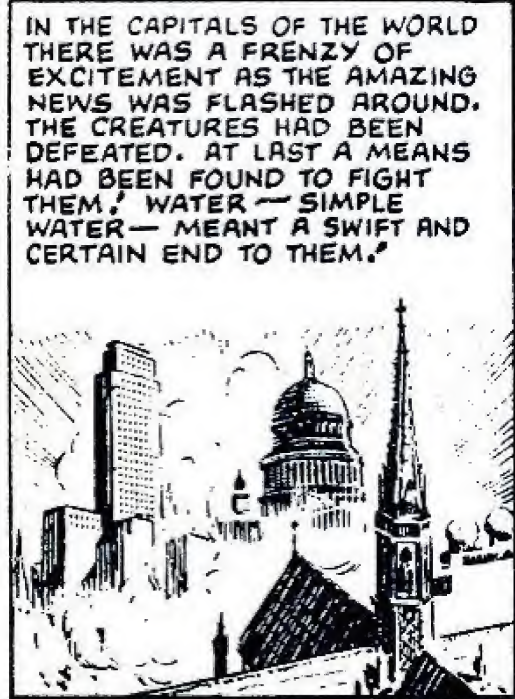


THEY'VE GONE! TERRIFIC WORK, JOCK! NOW WE KNOW HOW TO HANDLE THEM!



COME ON DOON AGAIN, LADDIES, AND AH'LL GIE YE ANOTHER TASTE OF MA HOSE!

IN THE CAPITALS OF THE WORLD THERE WAS A FRENZY OF EXCITEMENT AS THE AMAZING NEWS WAS FLASHED AROUND. THE CREATURES HAD BEEN DEFEATED. AT LAST A MEANS HAD BEEN FOUND TO FIGHT THEM! WATER — SIMPLE WATER — MEANT A SWIFT AND CERTAIN END TO THEM!



AND AT AN EMERGENCY MEETING OF THE COMBINED CHIEFS OF STAFF...

I SUGGEST THAT ALL PARATROOP AND COMMANDO UNITS BE EQUIPPED WITH WATER-THROWERS AT ONCE! USE ONE-MAN FLAME THROWERS BUT FILL THEM WITH WATER INSTEAD OF JELLIED PETROL!



AND LATER AT A PARATROOP TRAINING DEPOT IN SOUTHERN ENGLAND...

AT YOUR TARGETS — AIM!



LUMME! WHAT AN ARMY! THEY'LL BE TURNING US INTO AIR-RAID WARDENS NEXT!

BUT THAT NIGHT BEGAN A REIGN OF TERROR. THE LONG-EXPECTED AND DREADED ATTACK BY THE BEINGS FROM BEYOND FELL IN ALL ITS FURY UPON THE CITIES OF THE WORLD. FLEETS OF THE DEADLY DISC MACHINES SWOOPED DOWN UNLEASHING CRACKLING ELECTRICAL RAYS THAT TURNED WHOLE CITIES INTO SMOKING RUINS!



BACK IN LONDON THE BRITISH PRIME MINISTER CALLED A COUNCIL OF WAR...

GENTLEMEN, BRIGHTFORD IS BEING ATTACKED. THE SPACE RAIDERS HAVE LANDED. WE MUST FIGHT BACK IN THE ONLY WAY WE CAN. I'M ORDERING THE THIRD PARATROOP DIVISION INTO ACTION.



IT WAS AT THIS STAGE THAT ROD COLLINS, THE TEST PILOT OF THE WORLD'S MOST ADVANCED AIRCRAFT, X.N.2, WAS BROUGHT BACK INTO CONTACT WITH THE THREAT FROM OUTER SPACE...

X.N.2. IS FASTER THAN ANYTHING ELSE WE'VE GOT. I WANT YOU TO RUSH THE FIRST ASSAULT PLATOON TO BRIGHTFORD. THE REST OF THE PARA. DIVISION WILL BE FOLLOWING UP IN NORMAL TRANSPORT PLANES.

VERY GOOD, SIR.



AND THROUGH THE BLAZING CHAOS MOVED THE RELENTLESS SPACE CREATURES, DRIVING THE TERRIFIED SURVIVORS BEFORE THEM!



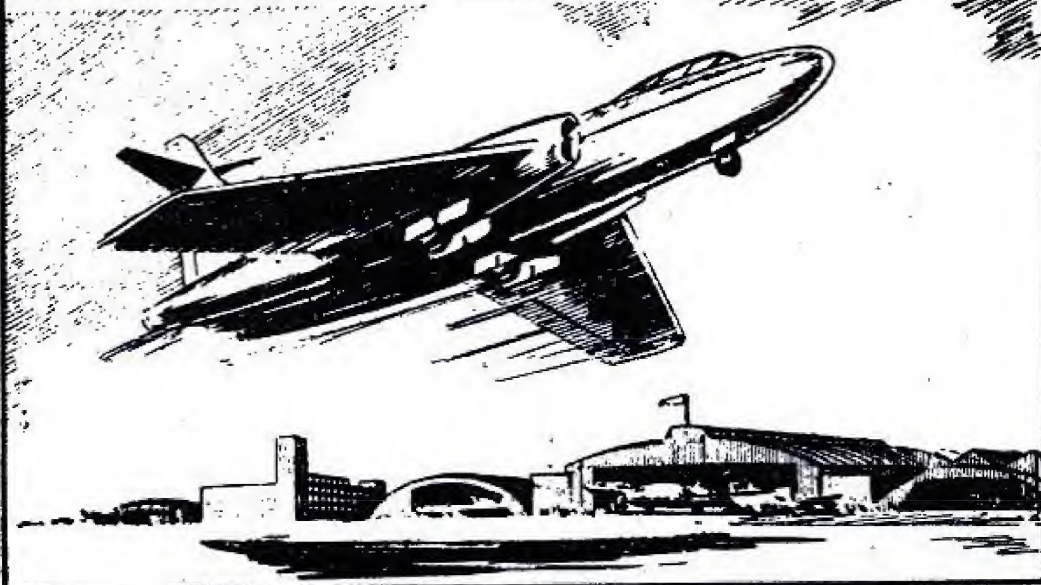
X.N.2. WAS WHEELED OUT ONTO THE TARMAC AND SOON THE PARATROOPS WERE FILING ON BOARD...



WHAT A BEAUTY. THIS MUST BE THAT NEW SUPER JOB. I'LL BET SHE CAN MOVE!

COME ON, YOU THREE. MOVE! THERE'S WORK TO BE DONE.

TAKE-OFF ORDERS FLASHED FROM THE CONTROL TOWER, AND ROD SENT THE LOADED X.N.2. SCREAMING INTO THE AIR.



THEY SAY THESE GOONS VANISH AS SOON AS THE WATER TOUCHES THEM.



IF THEY DON'T YOU CAN KISS YOUR AUNT FANNY GOODBYE. COR. THEY OUGHT TO CALL THIS OPERATION SCENTSPRAY. GIVE ME THE OLD TOMMY-GUN ANY TIME.

MEANWHILE ROD COLLINS WAS MUSING OVER THE SITUATION...

THE CREATURES DIDN'T START ANY TROUBLE UNTIL THAT WATER BUSINESS. I DON'T BELIEVE THEY MEANT TROUBLE! BUT THE WATER RATTLED THEM BADLY AND THIS IS THEIR RETALIATION. BUT IF THEY DIDN'T INTEND TO CONQUER EARTH, THEN WHAT THE BLAZES DID THEY INTEND?



BUT, JUST THEN, AS X.N.2 NEARED THE SMOULDERING RUINS OF BRIGHTFORD...



THEY'VE SPOTTED US! JUMP! I'LL HOLD HER ON AN EVEN KEEL AS LONG AS I CAN. HURRY, FOR PETE'S SAKE!

AND SO THE PARATROOPS TUMBLED OUT OF THE SPOTTED PLANE IN RAPID SUCCESSION AS THE MYSTERIOUS FLYING DISC FROM ANOTHER WORLD SWOOPED DOWN ON ROD'S AIRCRAFT.





ALL AWAY, SIR!
COME ON! JUMP BEFORE
IT'S TOO LATE!



NEVER MIND ME! I'M
STAYING WITH THE PLANE!
JUMP, MAN! AND GOOD
LUCK!

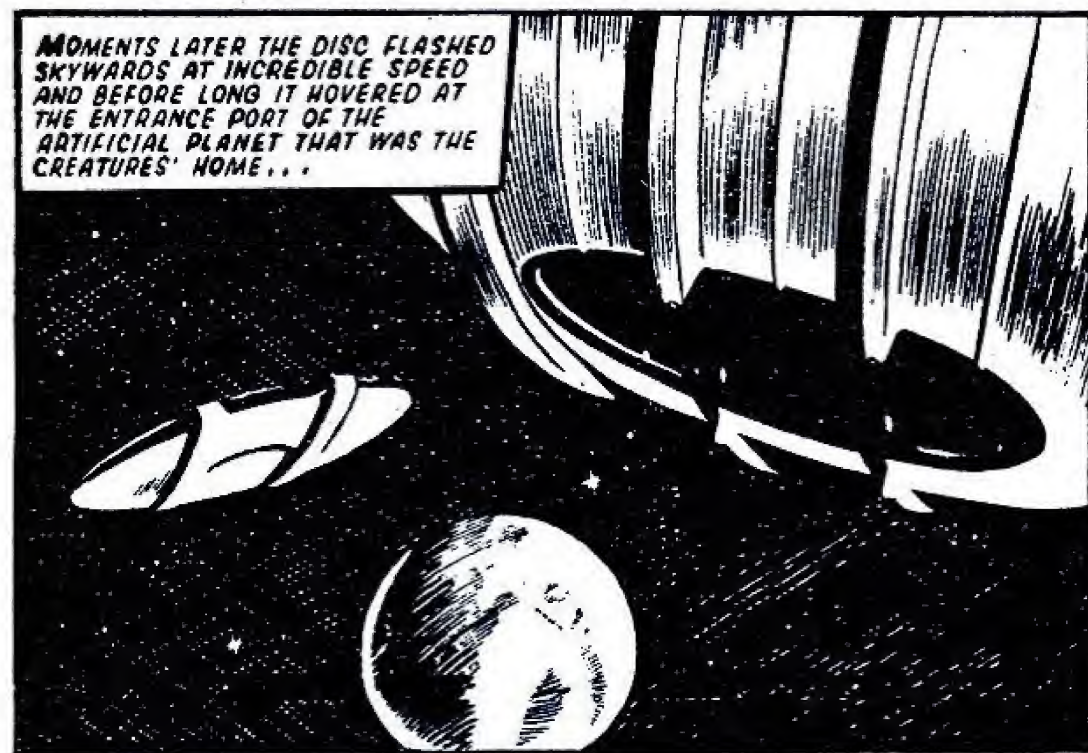


AS THE SERGEANT LEAPT, THE GIANT DISC
CLOSED IN ON THE WORLD'S MOST ADVANCED
NUCLEAR AIRCRAFT...

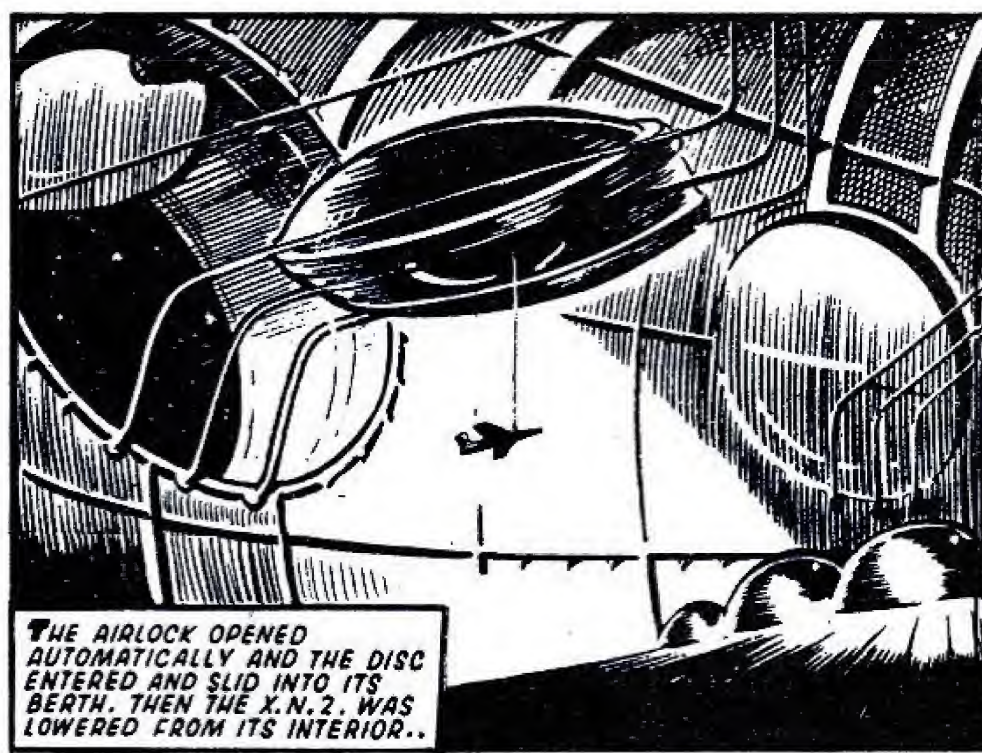


TALK ABOUT
JONAH AND THE
WHALE! HE HAD
NOTHING ON
THIS!

SUDDENLY ROD WAS PLUNGED INTO AN
EERIE DARKNESS AS THE X.N.2. WAS SWALLOWED
UP BY THE GREAT FLYING MACHINE FROM ANOTHER WORLD..



MOMENTS LATER THE DISC FLASHED
SKYWARDS AT INCREDIBLE SPEED
AND BEFORE LONG IT HOVERED AT
THE ENTRANCE PORT OF THE
ARTIFICIAL PLANET THAT WAS THE
CREATURES' HOME...



THE AIRLOCK OPENED
AUTOMATICALLY AND THE DISC
ENTERED AND SLID INTO ITS
BERTH. THEN THE X.N.2. WAS
LOWERED FROM ITS INTERIOR..



ROD COLLINS BLINKED IN THE BRIGHT
LIGHT AND LOOKED AROUND HIM! STRETCHING
OUT BEFORE HIM WERE
ROWS OF HUGE,
GLEAMING
DOMES...

GREAT SCOTT!
INSIDE THESE DOMES
ARE ALL THE THINGS THE
CREATURES TOOK FROM
EARTH. THEY'RE ALL SET
OUT AS IF THEY WERE
ON SHOW!



WHEN ROD LOOKED CLOSER HE SAW THAT
UNDER THE GLEAMING DOMES WERE OTHER
OBJECTS THAT DID NOT COME FROM THE EARTH,
BUT FROM OTHER WORLDS
UNKNOWN TO HIM.
THEN, SUDDENLY A
STRANGE NOTION
STRUCK HIM...

I'VE GOT IT! THESE
CREATURES ARE COLLECT-
ORS! THEY'VE GATHERED
SPECIMENS OF LIFE FROM
EVERY PLANET IN THE
GALAXY! THAT'S WHY THEY
DIDN'T GET NASTY UNTIL
WE ATTACKED THEM WITH
THE WATER HOSES! THEY
WEREN'T LOOKING FOR
WAR. THEY WERE HUNTING
FOR THINGS FOR THEIR
COLLECTION!

ALONG EITHER SIDE OF THE GREAT HALL WERE TRANSPARENT DOMES CONTAINING WEIRD CREATURES AND SINISTER RELICS FROM MANY WORLDS...



WHEN ROD FLUNG OPEN THE FUSELAGE DOOR...



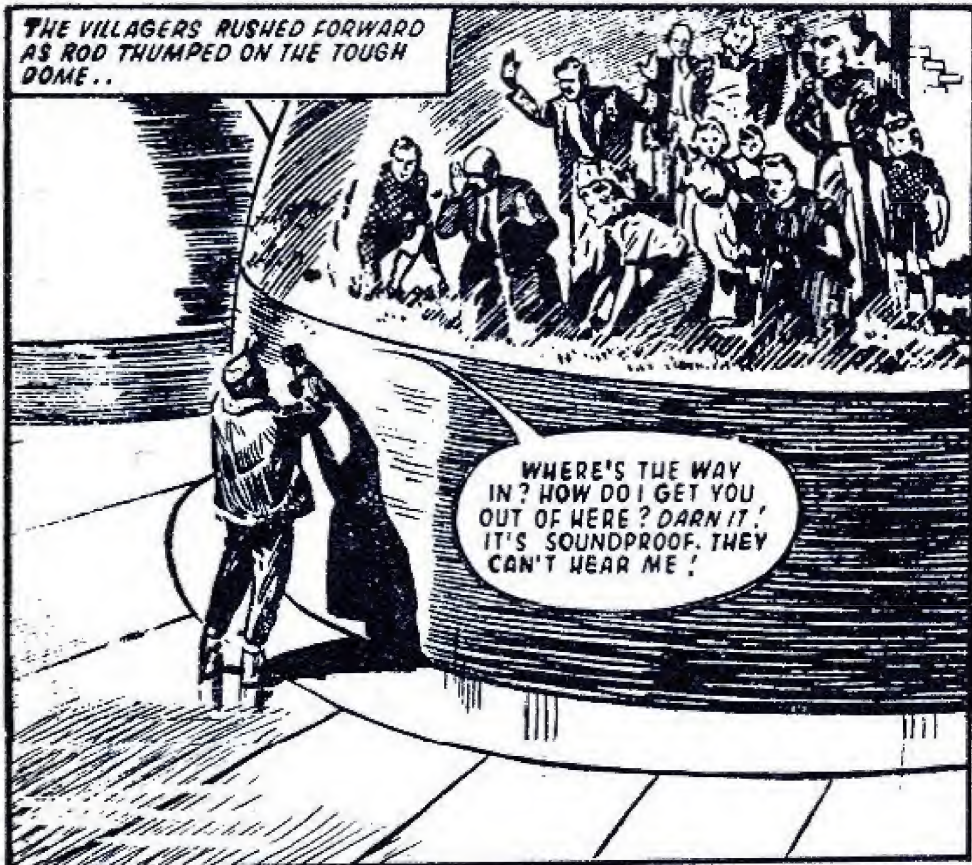
GREAT SNAKES! THAT ONE OVER THERE CONTAINS THE VILLAGE THAT THEY LIFTED RIGHT OUT OF THE ENGLISH COUNTRYSIDE!

SPRINGING DOWN TO THE GLASSY FLOOR OF THE ARTIFICIAL PLANET, ROD COLLINS RACED FORWARD...



THE FOLKS ARE STILL ALIVE! I'VE GOT TO SET THEM FREE SOMEHOW!

THE VILLAGERS RUSHED FORWARD AS ROD THUMPED ON THE TOUGH DOME...



WHERE'S THE WAY IN? HOW DO I GET YOU OUT OF HERE? DARN IT! IT'S SOUNDPROOF, THEY CAN'T HEAR ME!

THEN THE VILLAGERS MADE FRANTIC GESTURES WHICH CAUSED ROD TO TURN ROUND...



THE CREATURES! NOW I'M FOR IT!

TENTACLES WAVING, THE MEN FROM SPACE APPROACHED ROD SLOWLY...



CORNERED, ROD SWIFTLY UNBUTTONED HIS BREAST POCKET AND SWITCHED ON HIS POCKET SHORT-WAVE RADIO...



THEY'VE GOT ME! THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO AGAINST THESE FIENDS! BUT I'VE GOT TO GET A MESSAGE THROUGH TO EARTH AND TELL THEM WHAT I'VE FOUND OUT!

CALLING EARTH! CALLING ANY STATION ON EARTH! ROD COLLINS OF LONDON SPEAKING. CAN YOU HEAR ME? I AM A PRISONER ON THE INVADERS' PLANET. THEY'RE CLOSING IN. THIS IS MY LAST MESSAGE!



AS ROD HASTILY TRANSMITTED HIS MESSAGE OVER HIS SMALL SHORT-WAVE RADIO HE PAUSED IN AMAZE-MENT. THE ADVANCING CREATURES HAD STARTED TO REEL ABOUT UNCONTROLLABLY.



THEN ROD REMEMBERED THE THEORY THAT A CERTAIN UNKNOWN RADIO WAVE-LENGTH WAS FATAL TO THE CREATURES WHO LIVED ON RADIO ENERGY..



THE TRANSMISSION IS AFFECTING THEM! I MUST HAVE STRUCK THE ONE WAVE-LENGTH THAT THEY CAN'T STAND! IT'S POISON TO THEM JUST AS SOME FOOD IS POISON TO PEOPLE ON EARTH.

LEAVING HIS TRANSMITTER SWITCHED ON, ROD COLLINS TURNED QUICKLY TOWARDS THE GREAT DOME IN WHICH THE IMPRISONED VILLAGE WAS HOUSED..

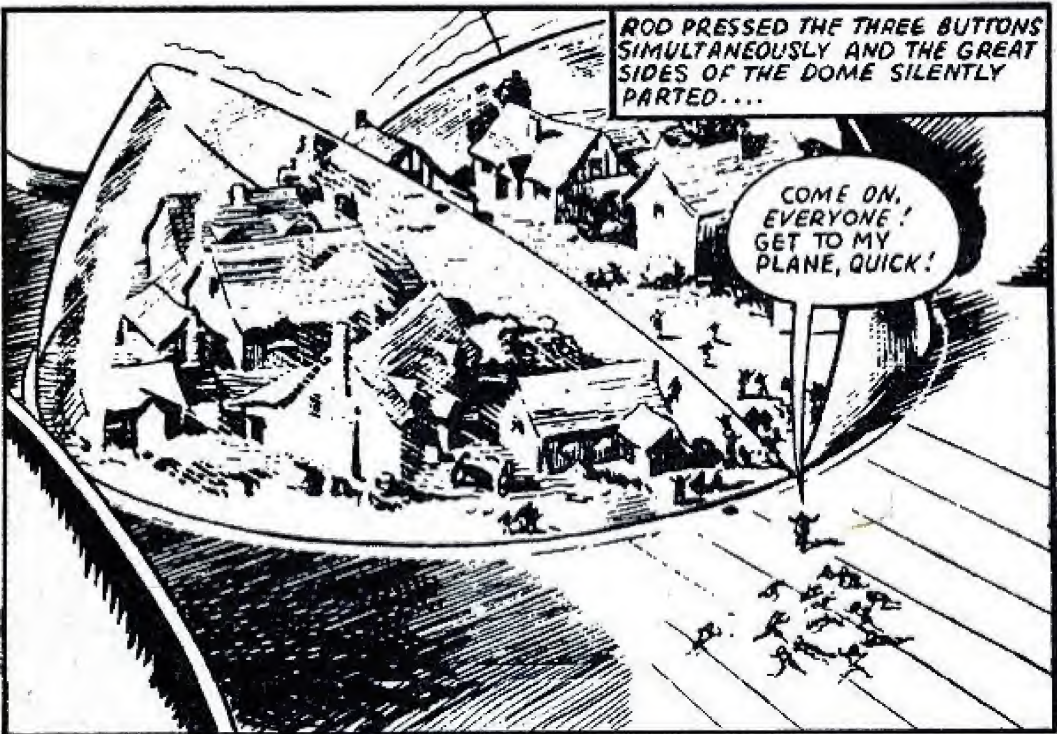
THERE'S A CHANCE WE CAN STILL ESCAPE IF ONLY I CAN FIND SOME WAY OF RELEASING THESE PEOPLE. THERE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE A DOOR OF ANY KIND!



THEN ROD DROPPED ON ONE KNEE..



WAIT A MINUTE! THIS FLOOR PANEL MUST BE THE ANSWER. THESE THREE BUTTONS ARE MEANT TO BE OPERATED BY A THREE-TOED FOOT!



ROD PRESSED THE THREE BUTTONS SIMULTANEOUSLY AND THE GREAT SIDES OF THE DOME SILENTLY PARTED....

COME ON, EVERYONE! GET TO MY PLANE, QUICK!

BREATHLESSLY THE VILLAGERS SCRAMBLED ABOARD ROD'S PLANE..



HURRY UP! MY RADIO'S EATING UP THE CURRENT! IF THE BATTERIES GIVE OUT, WE'RE SUNK!

NEXT MOMENT THE X.N.2. WAS ROARING TOWARDS THE GIANT AIRLOCK WHICH OPENED AUTOMATICALLY...



WE'VE MADE IT!

BUT AS SHE HIT THE AIRLESS VOID, THE AIRCRAFT DROPPED LIKE A STONE...



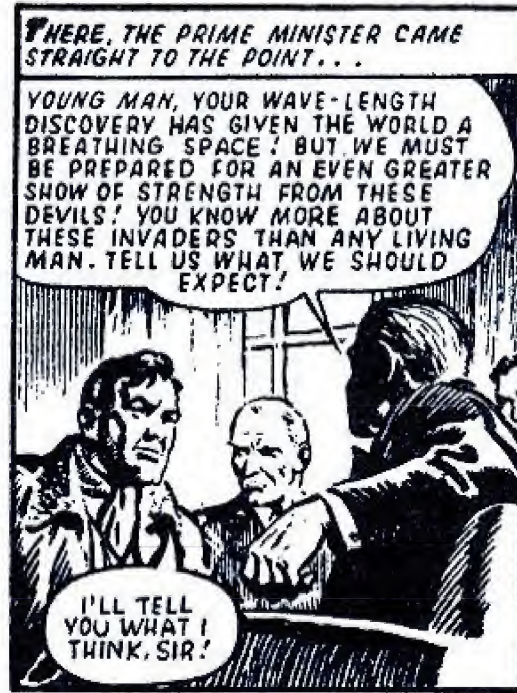
WE'RE FALLING IN SPACE! THERE'S NO AIR! I'VE GOT TO PULL HER OUT OF IT AS SOON AS WE HIT THE EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE OR THE WINGS WILL BE RIPPED OFF!

WITHIN THE SEALED CABIN, THE RESCUED VILLAGERS WERE BREATHING THE PLANE'S OXYGEN, OTHERWISE THEY WOULD HAVE PERISHED IN THE AIRLESS VOID.

ROD BATTLED WITH THE CONTROLS AS THE EARTH'S AIR-LAYER BEGAN TO WHISTLE AND SHRIEK ABOUT THEM...



GOT HER! SHE'S UNDER CONTROL! NOW TO GET A MESSAGE BACK TO EARTH-THE SECRET THAT SHOULD DRIVE OFF THESE CREATURES FROM SPACE!

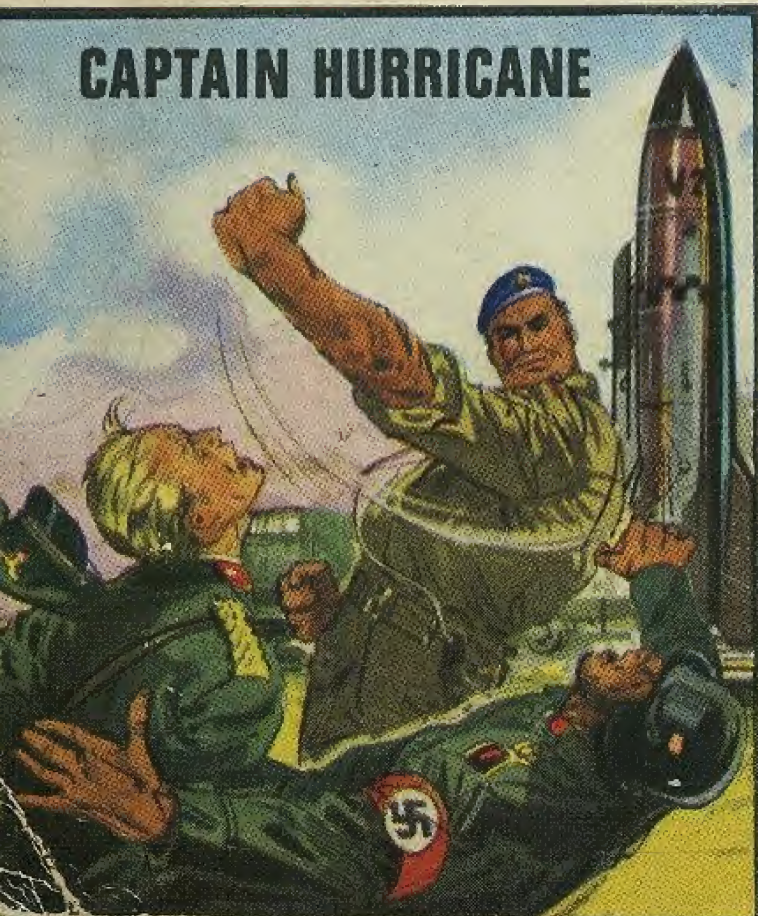


VALIANT SPACE SPECIAL

1967



CAPTAIN HURRICANE



KELLY'S
EYE



THE
STEEL
CLAW

